

Perennial Negotiations/Elemental Encounters
Autoethnographic Perspectives on Approaching Food Sovereignty

Megan Martens, BA Geography

Social Justice and Equity Studies

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Faculty of Social Sciences Brock University
St Catharines, Ontario

©2010

Abstract

This thesis uses a multifaceted process to engage with the topic of food sovereignty in California. It employs diverse methods, including critical and creative prose, photography, autoethnographic mixed media, storytelling and poetry. I am particularly concerned with the challenges of approaching food sovereignty, a radical praxis that combines subsistence practices with anti-capitalist resistance, while in my own “skin,” which is thoroughly embedded in white, urban, middle classed culture and in contextualizing ecological relationships/kinships via cultural, historical and economic trajectories. The project utilizes a processual method/ology drawing substantially from the work of Brian Massumi to explore these issues through four creative narrative pieces which coalesce around the elemental metaphors of air, fire, water and earth. Following Deleuze and Guatarri’s concept of rhizomatic plateaus, the thesis narratives are comprised of many non-hierarchical layers and can be read from many angles. Each is offered “in process” rather than as a finished piece, thus practically validating the concept of the ongoing work of research and suggesting the equally omnipresent possibility of change and mutation in the formation relationally based knowledges. Cultivating ecological ethic and healing on multisensory levels, as well as commitment to emergent and re-productivist worldviews are goals of this project’s research.

How to engage with the present is tied up in the past. We used to re-member this. It happens around firelight, in marsh fogs and under the noonday sun, through stories, song and subsistence traditions. The humours of remembrance are as diverse as the Earth's many temperaments and topographies. But we all do it so as not to forget. To remember how to live in and with our neighbors, relatives and surroundings. Humans need reminding: "Stir well! Lie fallow! Let flavors marry! Let worms live! Share!" Practice and Poetry help with that. Dependence and Gratitude too. They always have. And still do... right? Not in every Where. Not for every Body.

Here in North America most no longer know how to participate in our own subsistence. Many do not engage in creative relation with the world anymore. Many have no concept of how the stewardship of this earth has been wrested from its indigenous keepers. Many have forgotten. These are causes for great sadness. And while the myth of modernity charms the docile and privileged right out of history, the hyper-spiced march of capitalism makes steady progress towards the demise of the rest, through genocide and myriad methods of violent intervention. It should not stand.

This is a story of one body. A collection of muscles and bone, of memory and imagination. A body trying to piece together the shards of history and the scraps of subsistence. A body with limbs mired in the past that is steadily wading through the present. A body travelling across pages and syntax. A body bending the borders of disciplines, states and time. It is a body walking the line of example instead of expertise. A body reaching through experience to experience metaphor differently. It's in the company of some of the other bodies she cares with, whose comingling compelled her to be. And oh say can you see? Her body has got the history of subsistence around its neck, trailing behind her like a sash, capable of strangling.

And Her body? It is mine.

Introductions

This thesis is structured a bit like Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomatic plateaus and a bit like the tangled mass of threads that sits in my sewing basket. You see, I embroider and I hate to waste thread. I keep all the random cuttings, as long as they're of stitchable length, in a sort of ball. This ball (which is not *so* big, embroidery thread is thin stuff) probably contains wisps from at least the last three projects I've worked on. Maybe more. Every so often I pick it up and try to untangle it. If I sat down for a good while, I could probably unravel the whole thing. But it's been around so long, I'm kind of attached to it- I'd rather just pull at it for a while. Re-tangling as I un-ravel. And then sit back; admiring the new color combinations my tugging has arrived at. In any case, you can read what follows from many angles, in many orders – there are layers (upon layers).

I suppose it begins here, with introductions. The first, which follows, is a broad initiation to the thesis' topics, organization, theoretical inspirations and methodology. Following this "formal" introduction is a more informal and poetic orientation to the project and its four elemental narratives which function as separate entities inextricably woven together. Each narrative 'encounter' uses an element (Air, Fire, Water, and Earth) as both an operative metaphor to communicate a particular aspect of my foray into food sovereignty, as well as the material means by which the viscera, the tangible actions and outcomes, of a particular area of my discussion and research are explored. All of the particulates: the images, poems, narratives and so on, that combine to form this thesis, are uniquely individual and yet intertwined so deeply that they form a cohesive body of work. This body differs from a Cartesian model, however, in that the body's elements remain (or aim to be) functional only so long as they are viewed holistically and infused with the sacred. The elements evoke a systemic concept of a body's rudimentary

structure like “molecules” or “tissues” as they simultaneously deconstruct the idea of structure, reconfiguring flows of ideas and relationships between issues and beings. Thus the elements embody aspects of the “body without organs”, (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) which is continually becoming. By questioning the structures that have dictated how it is supposed to function, this body creatively experiments along a plane of immanence, which envelops and embeds it within the experience of contextual relationships and history. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) This process is explained through many examples that document a non-hierarchical individual’s collective, emergent, esoteric and embodied engagement with sovereignty and the world.

Instead of adhering to any specific cultural tradition, I structure these elemental boundaries based on my personal engagement with them (which has in turn been influenced by several cultural traditions, my reading and my life experience). I offer a poetic introduction to the metaphoric possibilities I see in each element at the beginning of the encounter as well as a more formalized discussion of how I conceptualize the element within my narrative projects. The narratives are the like main course of this meal, but time constraints being what they are, we’re only going to be able to get through the first few courses. At this juncture, supper’s not ready yet. Still, I should warn you this thesis is like a dinner party at my family’s house: there are courses plenty- aperitifs, appetizers and so on, in store. I hope you’re hungry....

Motivations

In this thesis, food, and the processes that surround its production and consumption as well as the relationships surrounding the broader topic of nourishment provide the impetus for my engagement with the practice of sovereignty. This is to do with the special role food products, especially plants, have played in my life but is also to do with the capacity for nourishment practices to connect humans to each other and to the world. The sets of practices that make up the process of growing, eating and being nourished are moments when the physical elements of satiation and hunger co-mingle with their symbolic counterparts in an inseparable *mélange* of taste, experience and practice. Nourishment culture and food in particular, are discussed as throughout the thesis as accessible ways (although not the only ones) to knit theory and materialism.

Although food, like any single element that makes up cultures, cannot serve as a definitive means of understanding the people who eat it, it does have the capacity to cross the boundaries of physicality, politics and emotion, providing an embodied platform from which to explore issues of inequity and identity in the “post”-colonial and globally capitalized world. Food ways and taste formation have become more commonplace in the realm of academic research in the last twenty years; however, the relation of eating to the historical genealogy which places it amongst “primitive” (and therefore less culturally “evolved” by positivist standards) senses remains a part of current perspectives. (Sutton, 2001) In fact, these lingering racist and classed connotations not only shroud food studies, but colour much of the academic discussion regarding subsistence practices in general.

The phrase “food sovereignty” is a contemporary articulation used to describe a set of right to subsistence struggles whose roots are much older. It is utilized by diverse communities from across the world, most of whom represent indigenous, peasant/agrarian interests. Although intrinsically tied to struggles for political self determination, it grounds itself primarily in the struggle for the right to self determined subsistence. Within food sovereignty dialogues the relationship of nourishment to ecology, sacrality and the histories of subsistence cultures are entwined and inform each other reciprocally. Without ecological knowledge grounded in metis¹, or practical know how, passed through both intergenerational teachings and ritual, ethical subsistence practices are near impossible to cultivate. This makes ‘food sovereignty’ movements apt places from which to examine the politics of capitalism and their relation to subsistence practices.

Philip McMichael discusses food sovereignty as a “non-state” concept defined by an organizational structure that puts decision making authority in the hands of the producers of food. This food regime grants primacy to the health of localized human and ecological relationships, rather than the growth of corporate wealth through global markets. (McMichael, 2004) The practice of subsistence requires small scale community based organization and agro-ecological practices that are culturally and geographically specific. The localized nature of this philosophy/practice distinguishes it from political sovereignty discussions organized around the inevitability of large nation states and centralized governance.

The phrase was first coined in 1996 at the World Food Summit in Rome. This event brought the newly formed Via Campesina organization into public view. The Via Campesina’s

¹ The origin of the word metis is Greek and means wisdom, craft or skill. “Metis is experiential knowledge and it is most always local. Metis is that subtle, intuitive perception...It is ‘the ability and experience necessary to influence the outcome—to improve the odds in a particular instance’ (Scott, 1998, p. 318)

presence effectively disrupted mainstream agricultural and food debates by demanding they be granted official delegate status as representatives of a global peasant farmer voice, shifting the Food Summit's focus to include anti-globalization concerns. (Desmarais, 2007) Since then, the food sovereignty movement has expanded to include the collective concerns of farmers and peasants as well as pastoralists, fisher-people and other indigenous communities.

The Via Campesina exemplifies a relationally based conceptualization of knowing through their focus on dialogue, through web-based discussions, conferences and global protests, making relationality an integral part of their action plans. (Via Campesina, 2007) To forge alliances across the globe however, necessitates both a geographically specific identity and collective embracement of affinity. Thus this movement finds itself, almost paradoxically, astride two very different ways of living. On one hand, the member organizations work locally, using non-industrial as well as geographically and culturally appropriate methods to practice subsistence. On the other, they are engaged in a transcommunal struggle against corporate capitalism which has prompted them to utilize technology to build alliances and communicate across vast socio-spatial extents.

The Via Campesina's sense of coalition based action centers around economic factors, although it is epistemologically guided. Their coalition work is not based in a positively constructed set of shared beliefs and practices, but a negative one. The proponents of food sovereignty are collectively fighting against,

“imperialism, neo-liberalism, neo-colonialism and patriarchy, and all systems that impoverish life, resources and eco-systems, and the agents that promote the above such as international financial institutions, the World Trade Organisation, free trade agreements, transnational corporations, and governments that are antagonistic to their peoples” (Forum on Food Sovereignty, Forum Documents, 2007)

This is a negative articulation of community, but it is precisely that, which allows diverse articulations of community to co-exist. Members of Via Campesina do not practice agriculture, foraging, or family homogenously; in fact, they emphatically reject homogenization of culture. To ensure ecological and cultural prosperity across the globe, the members of this food sovereignty movement have agreed to work collectively against forces that commonly oppress them rather than reach a common definition of how life should be approached. Although this turns Harvey's "dialectical utopianism" on its head, they still function as "insurgent architects", (Harvey, 2000) translating the commonality of their struggle to disparate member groups. Their goal is to remove the yoke of corporate capitalist dominion and to continue to develop their own subsistence practices motivated by equitable relationships between genders, human and non-human members of the eco-systems and communities who must share resources to thrive.

Marx characterized the initial shift from communal ownership of resources to private ownership that originally occurred in 16th century Europe and its early colonies as "primitive accumulation," which David Harvey says "entailed taking land, say, enclosing it, and expelling a resident population to create a landless proletariat, and then releasing the land into the privatized mainstream of capital accumulation." (Harvey, 2003) Marx saw this process as a violent one, yet, capitalist theorists like Adam Smith asserted that primitive accumulation was a natural, peaceful process. Harvey describes Smith's opinion thus,

There were some people that were hard working and some people who were not. Some people who could be bothered, and some people who could not be bothered. And the result of that was that, bit by bit, those who were hard working, and could be bothered, accumulated some wealth. And eventually, those who could not be bothered, could not accumulate wealth, and in the end, in order to survive, preferred, actually, to give up their labor power as a commodity, in return for a living wage. (Harvey, 2003)

Due to the pervasive influence of positivist theorists such as Smith on historical accounts of capitalism's emergence, the importance, indeed the very existence of persistent struggle for the right to subsistence, which has been consistently pursued by agrarian peoples, especially women and colonized peoples, has often been excised from the historical record. (Shiva, 1997) (Federici, 2003) (Merchant, 1983) (Mies, 1998)

Contemporary processes of primitive accumulation are also not readily apparent to those who benefit from them in part because of the spatial separation of destructive versus productive incarnations of capitalist power. The spatiality of power's manifestations is further organized along racial, gendered and classed lines, which manifest on multiple scales. (Barnett, 1999) They range from family relationships (Domosh & Seager, 2001), to urban neighborhoods (Schein, 2006), but perhaps most notably, to the divides between the Global North and South. (McMichael & Patel, 2004) These factors combine to form structural and epistemological barriers that work to protect the privilege of wealthy elites. In this way both local and global effects of the industrial capitalist system continue to be displaced, often settling on the backs of populations and geographic locales marginalized by capitalist hierarchies. (Mies, 1998)

Further, while elite actors, such as white middle class Americans, approach their everyday lives through capitalist epistemologies, there is little economic or moral motivation to compel them to give up positions of power. (Cook, 2006) Only when those in the Global North are more fully apprised of the breadth of history surrounding food production, colonialism and genocide and can see it as integral to the formation and perpetuation of a capitalist economy, can more ethical economic decisions be negotiated in the future.

Although struggles for indigenous/agrarian/peasant sovereignty via subsistence have always accompanied the violent processes of accumulation and enclosure that secure elite

ownership, it is contemporary struggles, like those articulated by food sovereignty activists that are especially relevant to my research. This is because they demonstrate how peoples who embody the trajectory of ancient worldviews and practices are responding to the challenges of contemporary economic, military and industrial processes in ways that challenge constructions of indigeneity and peasantry as either “primitive” or “pure”. Specifically, they offer materially embodied examples of how ancient agro-food and ecological practices are being dynamically repositioned to reinvigorate and encourage accessible methods of engendering inclusive and ethical relationships between humans and the Natural World. These alternatives are especially important in North America because the ecological knowledge base has been systematically eroded and the classed, gendered and racialized aspects of food and agriculture are carefully disguised by corporate media and educational institutions.

Much of the discourse that emanates from the global north discusses sovereignty as it relates to control over geographic territory and the various methods that are used to secure it. (Bartleson, 1995) Most discussions of sovereignty that draw from these northern traditions are organized around constructions of nation-states and the territorial authority they enforce. For example, Elizabeth Weber discusses how sovereignty implies absolute authority held by a state over the land and people within its boundaries as well as recognition of this authority from states outside. (Ansell & Di Palma, 2004) Krasner, on the other hand, defines four distinct meanings of “sovereignty”, which he presents as a comprehensive, yet not necessarily covariant list. (Krasner, 1999) Ansell and Di Palma however, seek to enumerate similarities between Krasner’s categories asserting that,

“all four types of sovereignty commonly presume “territoriality”, that the state is a “discrete” (and for the most part spatially contiguous) territorial unit demarcated by boundaries, and that the world is carved up politically into discrete, territorially demarcated units. Second, all

four types of sovereignty described by Krasner concern claims about public authority over territory”

(Ansell & Di Palma, 2004)

Krasner’s, Ansell’s and Di Palma’s explanations validate and naturalize the violence that accompanies expansion of territorial authority by excluding ethical variables from their discussions. The ontology of violence and possession, however, are integral to the understanding of state formation and to deconstructing the “innocence” of European history. In truth, the types of sovereignty discussed in most political tomes, like other colonial versions of history, are neither comprehensive nor innocent. Although often presented as monolithic, they emerged from a location which is gendered and classed as well as racially, and spatially specific. (Tuhiwai-Smith, 1999)

The evolution of territorial sovereignty is unavoidably wound up in two interrelated practices: The systematic dismantling of Nature’s creative power through violent physical and textual control over regenerative processes and the protection of elite privilege by means of Imperial expansion, historically based in Roman Law, which has been used as the legitimating factor in sovereign authority right up to the present. Dominant understandings of sovereignty exclude alternate conceptions and *parallel practices* that have occurred, albeit under threat of violent retribution, alongside them.

Texts describing the ancient rites of heirogamy, or the sacred marriage, for example, are some of the earliest examples of Indo-European sovereignty practices. There are competing mythological versions of heirogamic tales, however, that demonstrate the existence of sovereignty as a contested concept even in early times. Problematically, the texts were written down after or during the middle ages, when patriarchy and Christianity had firmly been firmly established (through Imperium) in Europe. This means that the stories and practices of

Sovereignty in early European civilization come substantially filtered through the positions of the authors that inscribed them.

The goddess of the kingship rites was known in Sumeria as Inanna or Ishtar (in Celtic myth as Eiru, Sul, and Brighid and in Roman Britain as Britannia). (Matthews, 1992) This practice wedded a ruler to the embodied form of the land of which he was the caretaker. The queen who has may have played either a ritualistic or political role, was the human representative of the Earth's health, representing the creative principle, and the fecundity on which all humans depend for survival. (Campbell, 1964)

As time passed, the peaceable myths of a bountiful goddess who bestows fertility through rites at sacred groves, diminished. They were replaced with an increased focus on her son/consort whose interest was more often than not, political and specifically, dynastic. This mythological figure is present in the stories of Marduk, Mithras, and Christ. The formation of dynasties ruled by men, of course, necessitated control over the reproductive capacity of women and this shift in practice is often represented by the rape of the land goddess in myth. It articulates the opening of "the age when the chief concern of kings might become conquest, not of themselves, but of the world." (Campbell, 1964) The shift from sovereignty as an egalitarian self-determined choice to appease the health of the land to a politically possessive act of conquest is also evident here. Perhaps because the Celtic people, particularly the Irish were never "conquered" by the Roman Empire or subject to Christianity until the 10th century, the British/Celtic tradition has multiple evidences of the pre-patriarchal sovereignty myth making appearances within Christian times. (Campbell, 1964)

Caitlín Matthews speaks to this tradition by relating such stories to the symbolism of the grail. The grail is the cup of life that delivers salvation, in a Christian sense, but also prefigures

Christianity as an ancient British hallow, representing the life of the Earth and the creative force. The Grail Goddess, who is often called Sovereignty, appears in many forms, one of which is an old woman, the Cailleach (kal-yak). In stories like this, the old woman represents the earth in winter, or in what Matthews calls its “wasteland” form. To prove his loyalty to caring for the land, the knight must first kiss the Cailleach incarnation of the Earth before she transforms into the beautiful grail goddess who grants sovereignty. Matthews says that the king’s kissing the wasteland signifies his acceptance of the land as it is, without forcefully trying to change it. This acceptance is what transforms the earth into a fecund and beautiful giver of the water of life. Matthews also iterates the necessity of choice as an aspect of Sovereignty. She says,

The grail does not serve the self-server, neither are women available at the demand of men. The energy that is available from both Grail and Woman must be freely given *in an appropriate way*. It cannot be stolen, appropriated or won by trickery. The answer lies in the nature of the exchange...The conditions under which [the Grail and Women] can fulfill their desires *must first be prefaced by the freedom to act for themselves* (Matthews, 1992) (italics original)

The tension between defining sovereignty as an ecologically bounded relational choice or an extension of politicized territorial control is evident throughout European myth and history. Although struggles by peasants, agrarians and indigenous peoples to retain their sovereignty as ecological stewards have been consistently present throughout these histories, more often than not, textual records preserve a different perspective. One in which the agency of the non-violent, feminized or egalitarian worldview is presented as either absent or naturalized as hierarchically subordinate to that of the masculinized governing principle. The continued devaluing of reproductive processes and sovereignty perspectives embodied by subsistence practitioners can be observed in many arenas, one of which is the lack of alliance between food activists in the Global North to the term food sovereignty and its tenants.

Out of over 180 member organizations in the Via Campesina, only two are located in the United States. (Desmarais, 2007) In fact most of those struggling in the Food Sovereignty movement are located in geographic locations commonly referred to as “The Global South.” Further, while there are many organizations within the United States that advocate locally organized food systems; they seldom (if ever) use the word “sovereignty” in discussions of localized or anti-corporate methods of food production. While choosing not to articulate food activism as a “sovereignty” based struggle could be evidence of a semantic difference, I believe there are also epistemological roots to the difference in articulations of eco-food activism between organizations located on either side of the North-South divide. These are deeply embedded in social constructions of race, class, economy, and are greatly influenced by the discursive strength of corporately controlled media sources.

While there are many localist, agrarian and organic movements within the U.S. who advocate similar agricultural practices to Via Campesina member organizations, few articulate a specifically anti-neoliberal stance or explicitly link a call for dismantling capitalist and colonial based privileges to the need for agricultural change. In fact there is a dearth of dialogue concerning the role of privilege in food availability, food choice and participation in “ethical” agricultural systems along U.S. eco-food resistance fronts. The reasons for this gap are multiple and overlapping.

The contentious relationship of the American economy’s success to taboo subjects like covert military violence, racial inequality, particularly white privilege, US colonialism, imperialism and class struggle, makes critiquing capitalism difficult. I believe, however, that the stories hidden in between these gaps are some of the most important elements for understanding food sovereignty in a North American context. For example, in the U.S. only 4% of the “work

force” is engaged in agricultural pursuits (Kwa, 2002) but many sectors of the domestic agricultural system, especially soft fruits and vegetables as well as meat processing depend on the exploitation of undocumented workers. (Benson, 1999) (Walker, 2004) As the proponents of the “ecological footprint” model state, the US food supply is disproportionately dependent on a vast array of remote producers and consumes an inequitable amount of the Earth’s resources. (Deumling, Wackernagel, & Monfreda, 2003) However, ecological footprint studies collapse food decision making into a nationalized food choice. This ignores the role of corporate power, as well as power differentials amongst US bodies.

Food activism in North America is a racialized, gendered and classed phenomenon. As Rachel Slocum points out, the “alternative food system” is dominated by the white middle and upper class bodies who can afford to participate in them. The exclusive rights whiteness confers continue to be foundational factors in the organizational structure of many U.S. community food efforts as well, even if the “target population” is more racially or ethnically diverse. Yet the need for anti-racist and anti-oppressive education and training continues to get short shrift. (Slocum, 2006) (Slocum, 2007) The normalization of whiteness allows the racially privileged to operate from an elevated position where their actions and perceptions escape scrutiny. Further, there is a presumed innocence, an assumption of moral neutrality that allows the privileged to idealize their identity as “helpers” of the victims of racially based disadvantage without having to give up any of their own racially based privileges. White privilege is never spoken of as causal in relation to disadvantage and success is perceived as the result of moral rectitude and hard work not merely an undeserved subsidy granted due to historical dominance. (Schick, 2000)

To the extent that whiteness is an embodiment of privilege, and often affluence as well, it is also integrally related to the struggles of food-sovereignty activists, although these connections

are often rendered invisible. But, to the extent that Americans all are forced to participate in neo-liberal, corporately controlled markets, they are implicated in the effects of these structures. As McMichael says, “the social reproduction of affluence through the corporate empire rests on a foundation of destitution and destruction of social and ecological sustainability. (McMichael, 2004) In order to combat this legacy, Rachel Slocum suggests that service work undertaken by whites must consciously engage with the types of institutionalized racism present in community food systems. (Slocum, 2006) A critically transformative understanding of the performance of buying or growing food as well as the production of taste (both literal and metaphoric) must include the roles class, gender, race and colonialism play in these sectors.

Approaching global Food Sovereignty movements as both a participant and an ally, while positioned as a white middle classed body within US society, requires several reconfigurations of agro-food, ecological, and interpersonal relationships. Reconnecting links between violence and US prosperity, historical colonialism as well as the neo-colonial presents in which the US is currently involved is a start. It is also important, however, to valorize worldviews and practices that offer alternatives to nation state and corporate models of organization as well as anticapitalist methods that cultivate ethical connections between people and the natural world.

My thesis project advocates the catalyzation of revolutionary processes on intimate scales, intertwining my own family relationships with history, subsistence and ecological practices in California, my home state. Weaving these topics together is meant to form a bridge, linking relational and ecological ethics to an embodied remembering process that works to nourish a-capitalist practice and valorize the place of multi-sensory knowledges and topics like food within academic environments. This topic is an intensely layered one, operating on multiple scales and across diverse extents. Echoing this complexity my thesis project is also comprised of

many layers, and seeks to stretch the boundaries of how those layers can be communicated in an academic context.

Inspirations

I believe the relationships between indigenous rights, place-based knowledge and ecological ethics are intertwined with that of food sovereignty and these issues form a strong undercurrent to my discussions throughout the project. My goal is neither to prove nor demonstrate the legitimacy of “indigenous” or “peasant” ways of knowing through the text of this thesis. Rather, I seek to respectfully acknowledge the preexistence and preeminence of indigenous and agrarian worldviews by embodying the teachings I have received. This includes cultivating relationships and practices that embody an ethic of respect and gratitude for the regenerative processes of the earth as well as encouraging non-appropriative ways of learning from indigenous and agrarian/peasant teachings.

The “theoretical” foundations for my methodology consciously exceed the boundaries of what often constitutes an “academic” knowledge base. They are culled from a diverse set of texts, some of which come from academic institutions in the North, and some of which are collectively authored and published for a wide, public audience. My foundational knowledge has also been informed by cosmological perspectives from worldviews that reject the concept of authorship entirely, and this knowledge has often been transmitted through stories and oral traditions. Further, my theoretical framework embraces the importance of multi-sensory knowledge, so part of my theoretical orientation has emerged from practical experiences I have shared and embodied sensory information I have felt.

Historically, food sovereignty based struggles have coexisted with territorial sovereignty issues, (this includes dialogues regarding food security) as parallel but not dependent ideologies. Although the historical record has invisibilized them, it is important to discuss contemporary

food sovereignty struggles as persistent political movements with dynamic manifestations rather than modern phenomena. The extra-textual and non-state oriented positioning of many food sovereignty struggles call attention to the constructed nature of sovereignty discourses visible in the mainstream cultures of the Global North and ally them with many indigenous and peasant/agrarian worldviews. Therefore, to understand the epistemology of concepts such as food sovereignty involves the integration of types of knowledge and perspectives that challenge the pervasive acceptance of whiteness and capitalism within “legitimate” academic, economic and political circles.

For example, although Food Sovereignty movements include contemporary articulations that are textual, they are often not individualistically authored, but rather, gathered from food sovereignty practitioners and collectively written. They are, in essence, not unified, and rely on a diversity of subsistence practices that are geographically and culturally specific while rallying around a common identity as “people of the land.” (Desmarais, 2007) The practices which are essential aspects of food sovereignty exceed the boundaries of discourse because they integrate a more holistic understanding of knowledge which is multi-sensory, grounded in relational ethic, materially embodied and, often, spiritual.

The following definition of food sovereignty is the result of the collaborative efforts of delegates from over 100 indigenous/peasant/agrarian organizations that convened in Nyeleni, Mali in the spring of 2007.

“Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. It defends the interests and inclusion of the next generation. It offers a strategy to resist and dismantle the current corporate trade and food regime, and directions for food, farming, pastoral and fisheries systems determined by local producers. Food sovereignty prioritises local and national

economies and markets and empowers peasant and family farmer-driven agriculture, artisanal - fishing, pastoralist-led grazing, and food production, distribution and consumption based on environmental, social and economic sustainability. Food sovereignty promotes transparent trade that guarantees just income to all peoples and the rights of consumers to control their food and nutrition. It ensures that the rights to use and manage our lands, territories, waters, seeds, livestock and biodiversity are in the hands of those of us who produce food. Food sovereignty implies new social relations free of oppression and inequality between men and women, peoples, racial groups, social classes and generations.” (Forum on Food Sovereignty, Forum Documents, 2007)

This movement is based on the “cultivation of diversity” (Shiva, 1997) which recognizes the ecological necessity of choosing, that is exercising a right to “conserve and rehabilitate rural environments, fish stocks, landscapes and food traditions based on ecologically sustainable management of land, soils, water, seas, seeds, livestock and other biodiversity.” This sovereignty views the “diversity of traditional knowledge, food, language and culture, and the way we organise and express ourselves” as part and parcel of the right to subsistence. (Forum on Food Sovereignty, Forum Documents: Theme 3, 2007)

In addition to focusing on species diversity and health, the Nyeleni documents re-articulate sovereignty dialogues in several crucial ways. The persistent valorization of rural life and livelihoods is a fundamental aspect of food sovereignty’s orientation. Documents from Nyeleni also prioritize diversity and equity among peoples from similar cultural backgrounds by emphasizing a necessity for gender equity in realizing food sovereignty. Vandana Shiva’s organization, Navdanya, articulates the need for refocusing democracy on rural ways of life as an alternate world-view called “Earth Democracy”. This views humans as “embedded in the Earth Family, connected to each other through love and compassion, not hatred and violence” where “ecological responsibility and economic justice replaces greed, consumerism and competition as objectives of human life.” (Navdanya, 2007)

Linking subsistence practice to political self determination as well as sacrality also distinguishes food sovereignty movements from other types of food activism. The element of sacrality is, I believe, a fundamental aspect of ecological ethic, and so by extension, of food sovereignty, but it is not manifested through specifically doctrinal or even religious means. Rather, it emanates from an understanding of the world and all things on it as animate, spirit filled elements, the miracle of whose existence is deserving of gratitude and respect from humankind.

Basic Call to Consciousness is a collectively written treatise edited by Akwesasne Notes from the Hau De No Sau Nee peoples². The last section of the book is a chapter called “Our Strategy For Survival”, which details how it is only to the extent that “peoples and areas of the world are dependent on the giant multinational corporations...that the future is a dark and ominous one.” They speak of the breakdown of ecological knowledge and sacrality as parallel goals of colonial capitalist forces, calling attention to the fact that that “consciousness of the web that holds all things together was the first thing destroyed by the colonizers.” Further, they suggest that liberation from dependency on the marketplace is commensurate with liberation from colonialism. To accomplish this, they outline a materially spiritual path composed of two interdependent concepts they call “liberation technologies” and “liberation theologies”.

Liberation technologies are practices that generate food and energy for peoples, “which can be implemented in a specific place and which free those people from dependency on

² The unique authorship of this book has roots in several political and cultural issues. *A Basic Call to Consciousness* is a compilation of several papers that were presented by Hau De No Sau Nee representatives at a 1977 conference of indigenous peoples in Geneva, Switzerland. Although no specific authors are mentioned as such, and the book is discussed as representative of the Hau De No Sau Nee perspective, sometimes, a first name appears after a section. The name Sotisowaw appears after the section from which these quotes are taken, but I could find no information as to who this person might be. The book is listed as an edited volume published via a city in New York, This is because in 1974 the Hau De No Sau Nee peoples re-occupied their ancestral lands in Akwesasne. This book is thus an affirmation of Native political sovereignty and communally authored texts.

multinational corporations". These practices are complemented by liberation theologies, "belief systems which challenge the assumption, that the earth is simply a commodity which can be exploited... [and which] will develop in peoples a consciousness that ...the renewable quality [of life], the sacredness of every living thing, that which connects human being to the places they inhabit- that quality is the single most liberating aspect of our environment." (Akwesasne Notes, 1977)

The importance of place based knowledges through which the sacrality of life is venerated makes geographic discussions especially pertinent to food sovereignty dialogues. In particular, food sovereignty necessitates a valorization of rural ways of life as necessary to the realisation of social, economic and environmental justice. Though many sociological theorists from the Global North link capitalism to inequity, the relationship of urbanism and technology to these structures often gets short shrift and many ignore the ecological implications of perpetuating such ways of life. These discussions are often marginalized within academic circles as "wildly utopian" (Young, 1990) or radical. This is neither a hard nor fast boundary, of course and there are a few notable exceptions.

Michel De Certeau, for example, links the city and modern reliance on text to relay history as evidence of the dominating role of Enlightenment based euro-centric logic. He likens the blank page to the Cartesian subject, who emerges self-knowledgeable and autonomous. By inscribing history upon the page it produces a reality that inscribes the ability of man to create nature. Writing, he asserts, by "combining the power of *accumulating* the past and making the alterity of the universe conform to its models...is capitalist and conquering...and so is the modern city: it is circumscribed in a space in which the will to collect and store up an external population and the will to make the countryside conform to urban models are realized." (Barnett,

1999) (De Certeau, 2000, pp. 160-163) So when communication, language or political struggle is more embodied (rural) than abstracted (urban), the scriptural economy sees it as “a field to be plowed rather than to be deciphered, a disorderly nature that has to be cultivated.” (De Certeau, 2000, p. 164) History becomes a thing made by those in charge and not a story remembered collectively. Within the scriptural economy the power of authority is secured intellectually by using the abstraction of text to distance the living body and “thus also everything that remains, among the people, linked to the earth, to orality or to non-verbal tasks.” (p. 165-167) This intellectual process is further cemented by physical force, in the form of rape, war, displacement and genocide. Both text and urbanism are then intimately related to the historically violent processes of colonialism and capitalism, as well as to the ongoing devaluing of the regenerative powers of the Earth, echoed in the destruction of subsistence oriented cultures.

In order to heal the results of this schism of consciousness and practice, Bruno Latour suggests that the idea of “the collective”, the range of potential participants in relational engagement, be expanded to all human and non-human members of the global environment. Latour suggests that to democratize science (or economics or sociology or politics for that matter) requires a continual re-collecting of membership in the Earth body politic collective. Humans then, become the verbal members, but not the only members, whose health is important to account for. (Latour, 2004)

Latour’s hypothesis echoes preexistent contributions of many indigenous and peasant peoples as well as other recent additions to theoretical discussions like Lovelock’s “Gaia Hypothesis”, which describes the earth as a gigantic, sentient organism. (Lovelock, 2000) A reoccurring theme within many indigenous worldviews is that of a relational concept of knowledge based in an epistemology of interconnectedness that exceeds Eurocentric constructs

of kinship. Vine Deloria Jr. describes the Native American world view as summed up by the phrase, “We are all relatives” which he says is a knowledge producing/obtaining methodology that asserts that the relationship of one thing to another is what comprises reality as we understand it. Kinship then, is an experience of that relationality, which exists between all animate and (so called) inanimate objects. (Deloria Jr., 1999, p. 34) It is not, he says, a matter of blandly “loving nature” but cultivating a relationship with the immediate environment where one lives. (Deloria Jr., 1999, p. 223) This expanded notion of ecological membership allows for both traditional understandings of all life forms as relatives and post-modern affinities which stretch western patriarchal boundaries of kinship to flourish simultaneously in the political realm.

Since my research questions and theoretical orientation stress the importance of relational knowledges and ecologies, it was important that my research process began from a point where the ecology of practice and interaction was already established as relational. I needed a community of long term relationships to focus on. The community I chose happens to be my biological family. Researching my lived experience and focusing on my immediate family was an interesting process, especially for a person estranged from parts of her family for many years. However, the presence of common genes or blood is not the aspect of these interactions I would like to highlight. More important is that these relationships are weathered, capable of withstanding the passage of time and with a sufficient number of events passed between members that a year of upheaval would not immediately sever ties.

Kinship relations function throughout the thesis narratives like Deleuzian “refrains,” “patterns of sound, smell, touch, taste, and sight which make a space significant.” (Vannini, 2006) According to Deleuze and Guattari, the refrain is comprised of three sometimes simultaneous and overlapping processes. The first is a return to inhabiting an experience of

something 'known', like a frightened child sucking her thumb to bring back a feeling of safety. This aspect is the song, or sense of return. The presence of return implies that current experience does not resonate or is unsafe and unknown. The return is followed by the sense of being at 'home', of arriving at a space where one is safe and recognized- comfortable. There are boundaries to this space, however, since the refrain was used as a restorative action. In addition to 'the being' aspect of the refrain there is 'the opening.' In the opening aspect of the refrain's boundaries are transgressed in order to follow a different thread of song. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, pp. 310-312)

Each aspect of the refrain can be experienced through various milieus, or inhabitations of experience. A milieu is a more metaphoric understanding of place, a "seeing-as" (Zwicky, 2008)³ rather than a physical space. A refrain is practiced through layers of milieus and is imbued with rhythm. In this telling rhythm is not synonymous with meter, which is repetitious and encoded in a premeditated fashion. Rhythm is the situational experience of traveling from one milieu to the next. It is infinitely various, and like chaos, "has its own directional components, which are its own ecstasies."

Each elemental encounter inhabits the refrain of kinship through various milieus. The text strives to effect the rhythm that connects the milieus together, but also strives to be conscious of the non-textual aspects of rhythm that are present. In this instance the commitment to remembering works as the rhythm between the relational ethos of kinship. The actions I undertake inhabit overlapping and distinct milieus and attempt to deterritorialize my own embedded constructions of kith and kin.

³ Zwicke is quoting Wittgenstein from his *Philosophical Investigations* Part II §xi, where he speaks of multiple meanings of sight. Sometimes, he argues, sight is more literal: seeing a figure *that* is a rabbit, other times sight is metaphoric: seeing a figure *as* a rabbit. (He used the now famous "duckrabbit" drawing to illustrate this point.)

Isabelle Stengers discusses the global ecology of knowledge practices that each privilege different ways of knowing. She states that any “genealogy” (à la Foucault) (Foucault, 1972) must include “transversal linkages,” that is, transmit information in a way that must be felt or done in body, to “non-scientific spheres of practice” (Stengers, 1996). This is an important addition to Foucault’s analysis, which equates knowledge with a fundamentally productive notion of power. (Foucault, 1972) Although instructive, Foucault’s vision of power renders the violent history of primitive accumulation invisible and fundamentally excises those parts of knowledge that exist outside of text and discourse, like agricultural practices, traditional ecological knowledge and spiritual connection to land, or Geopolitik. (Federici, 2003) (Patel, 2005) To articulate the ways of approaching “food sovereignty” as liberation technologies/theologies, it is necessary to reconfigure the boundaries of ecological justice and sovereignty dialogues.

These dialogues must reflect that such heterogeneous relationships, which are simultaneously material, ethical and spiritual, cannot rely on exclusively textual means of communication. Due to the fact that this project remains an academic thesis, the inclusion of *text* in this communication process is also non-negotiable. So, how might a text go about ceasing to work within a scriptural economy? Can it refuse to function as a capitalist and conquering force?

To this question I would offer a twofold response: it can, but not by itself, and then only if poetics are present in it. The essay “Baler Twine” by Don McKay offers perspectives on the subject of “poetic attention,” which suggests that lyric language, especially when it seeks to describe the natural world challenges what he calls “materièl.” Materièl is a use of the natural world either through action or texts that exceeds use value, it “uses up” creation, colonizing life and attempting to imprint a wish to rule or impose structure on an inherently changeable landscape and sense of time. Poetic language and method offer ways to render the constructed

nature of language visible, and therefore challengeable, by bending the rules that comprise its structure. McKay discusses how “language in this poetic mode, compromises its nature, dismantling itself in a gesture towards wilderness.” (McKay, 1993) Wilderness, in this sense, both signifies and literally embodies the non-controlled, places where difference proliferates and is not suppressed or colonized.

But wilderness need not result in incomprehensibility. For instance, using alternate syntactic and semantic structures in a poetic piece of text can work affectively to demonstrate that communication is not entirely dependent on rules and order. Communicating metaphorically or lyrically also allows words to cooperate with one another in odd ways; they may consciously invoke senses, images or memories that are impossible or illogical, but which resonate with readers. Since it acquaints readers with the paradoxical “sense” of creative process and links it to the natural world, where contemporary society has imposed so much hierarchy, this type of writing/reading can be viewed as a form of liberation. However, I believe a text must also consciously work to challenge and dismantle its past uses to be revolutionary. I suggest that if textual communication overlaps and is imbued with embodied experience and materially focused knowledges it can work more holistically as a liberating force.

Method/ologies

My methodology advocates a diversity of knowledge practices, using multi-faceted or “multi-vocal” methods that emphasize process over signification or coding, following Brian Massumi, whose work has had a profound influence on my theoretical orientation. I find Massumi’s perspectives particularly salient because they offer avenues to integrate materially focused theory with creative practice in order to valorize multisensory experiences. Additionally, his focus on affect and the interrelation of multiple embodied elements in transformative processes has proved very helpful for this project’s conceptualization. Brian Massumi’s *Parables for the Virtual* theorizes suggestions for creating a methodology, resembling Deleuze and Guattari’s “rhizomatic” practice (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), that allows writing to become an experimental process, which he believes works for emancipation from the schizophrenic machines of capitalism.

In the scientific lexicon, rhizomes signify the fleshy underground stems of some plants. They grow horizontally, underground and facilitate the nutrient transfer necessary for vegetative reproduction. As they spread laterally, rhizomes sprout new leaf and root systems, which can break away from the parent plant and in turn send out rhizomes themselves. Rhizomes’ function in the plant world is twofold: on one hand they distribute nourishment, spreading nutrients from the parent plant to distant offshoots while these offspring grow the means to support themselves; on the other, they shield stem systems from predation and inhospitable above ground conditions allowing plants to perennate (live for multiple growing seasons) underground when they might not be able to survive otherwise.

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari use the example of plant rhizomes as a jumping off point to conceptualize a way of acting in the world that refutes hierarchical models and valorizes spontaneous and creative interaction with lived experience. This concept, which they call “rhizome”, relates the material functions of plants to an etheric understanding of knowing practices. The opening section of *One Thousand Plateaus* introduces the concept of “Rhizome”, an a-signifying discussion which proposes that “writing” can function as both episteme and metis. Meaning that their use of the word rhizome is both a spontaneously resourceful phenomenon of adaptability at work in the natural world as well as an abstracted understanding of how that work is accomplished. Deleuze and Guattari focus specifically on the ways rhizomes spread and rupture to form new connections and they also attribute some “behaviours” of rhizomes that are not reflected in the botanical meaning of the word, to emphasize the epistemic possibilities of acting through “rhizomatic” metis in the world.

I believe that “Rhizomes” cannot function as panaceaic responses to the world because they operate on the premise of “endless possibilities”, which, without the ethical tempering of an established cooperative framework comes dangerously close to the neo-liberal maxim of perpetual growth. Possibility is not the only consideration entailed in movement, the negotiation of a body in relation to everything it encounters is also important. This “proprioceptive”, as Massumi calls it, action, which acknowledges limits, is vital to ethical practice. (Massumi, 2002, pp. 58-61)

In some cases, such as in prairie ecosystems, wide spread grass coverage has a vital place in the ecosystem, while in others rhizomatic plants play much smaller roles. Unimpeded rhizomatic plant growth can (and has) result(ed) in the homogenization of species representation across landscapes, such as in the case of grasses introduced into disturbed areas. (Brooks, et al.,

2004) I think this teaches us that *geographically* specific ecological knowledge and response systems are integral to ethical ecological relationships. Without a specifically articulated commitment to *ethical, ecological and subsistence based* knowledge and practice, Rhizomes can neither effect nor affect the type of re-revolutionary consciousness I am speaking of.

I would like to add that since mine is a project which works for an eco-ethical transformation of epistemologies that fuel accumulatory and conquering practices, it requires a spontaneous “rhizomatic” element, which is experimental and valorizes the creativity of short term memory. It also demands a re-membering of historical trajectories and a valorization of indigenous wisdom, which is place based and often passed down through many generations. Capitalism seeks to turn places- spatial landscapes imbued with meaning and recognition into an-ethical and autonomous spaces. An a-capitalist practice must then seek to strengthen and render visible the *connections* that link elements of a sentient cosmos.

The philosopher’s Rhizome, like the botanical rhizome, can function as nutrient sender, helping to nourish distanced “nodes” of experience, sensation and knowledge that have been excised by the hierarchies of scientific capitalism. In many ways, the United States is located on both literally and spiritually disturbed ground. California’s post-European settlement agricultural practices, in fact, formed the template of industrialized agro-capitalism that continues to facilitate the destruction of subsistence cultures worldwide. (Walker, 2004) In the face of institutions and environments governed by neo-liberal capitalism there are parallel dearths of species, as well as a need for more conceptual diversity, critical thinking and creative process. In the Global South, where food sovereignty rights are being demanded and actively sought, there is an excess of genocide, coercion, predatory marketing and corruption, all of which are often externalized and

dis-embodied. It is sometimes hard to re-member that, despite the strength of these oppressive forces, between and betwixt these boundaries, creation and joy continue to persist.

I see Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome as a method of re-enchantment that offers a way to dissolve the fallacy of progress and refute the necessity of modernism. Far from fantastic, this process promises, like the fairy tales of 16th century Europe, a horrifying and humbling ride. Make no mistake, there are ghost stories in store, frights about which there is nothing benign. The question of elitist academic privilege must also haunt this project- simply by uttering "Rhizome" and Deleuze I am forging alliances with language so convoluted I can barely comprehend it. Does using a rhizome simply turn re-volution into a fast-track portal of sorts? A wild ride for vagrant "western" radicals seeking to dismantle the constructed boundaries between spirit and matter by travelling back? towards? an animistic conception of the cosmos? Or is it just a last radical gasp before I disappear down into the drain of capitalist complicity? What is the nature of connection? Or rupture?

For me the rhizome is an all encompassing journey. When I committed to it I flew down the rabbit hole. I wanted to write about food and food production, but I soon realized that to become a food sovereigntist, I needed vast amounts of ecological, agricultural and even spiritual know-how. I needed to wade through what had happened to destroy the sovereignty of California's many inhabitants. I didn't know that I would feel so compelled by the company of history's "magic mushrooms" that I would eat something bound to make me retch. What followed *was* a fantastic journey. Not unlike that of 'shaman/witch' who ingests poison, compromising her mortality to laugh in its face as she communes with the eternal- but a bit more "Alice". The rhizome of me and this thesis are always changing shape, but often, inadvertently becoming an oddly unexpected shape for the situation at hand. Sometimes we are awkward.

Neither Alice nor I were witch enough to handle our metamorphoses with much grace. We hadn't trafficked with enough mushrooms before Wonderland I guess. We never know when we swallow, if we will survive. Or if return is the apt word for what happens between trance and waking life. Everything is related.

My methodology regarding a commitment to connections involves "multi-vocal" or multiply attempted methods which emphasize process before signification or coding, following Massumi. Massumi's work, while it still perpetuates constructions of socio-spatial privilege has provided an excellent bridge to facilitate dialogue between the intellectualized discourses of academia and the practically embodied worldviews of food sovereignty activists. Throughout *Parables of the Virtual* Massumi asks questions about the relative importance of in/corporal aspects of a body's movement when it coincides with the potentials of transition rather than the constitutive systems in which it is positioned, employing the word "affect" to discuss these potentials of experimentation.

Affect is more than emotion; it is a body's capacity to affect and to be affected. It is because affect is always "attached to the movements of the body" that it isn't "just emotional." It is also fundamentally relational and dynamically mobile. By intentionally engaging in affective processes, bodies move across thresholds of transition, a "border crossing" in effect, which is what allows for change to happen. The inscription of our journeys across spatial extents and temporal experience is simultaneously internal and relational and that both are vital to our understanding of the past and our practices in the present.

Positionality, viewed from this perspective becomes an "emergent quality of movement", not a pre-existent phenomenon. (Massumi, 2002, p. 8) Massumi says that the extent to which the use of either position or emergence is privileged within cultural theory reflects an *ontological*

primacy, not a temporal one. Therefore, Massumi holds that indeterminate passage across thresholds or borders should have “ontological privilege” in that positionings are what emerge from embodied affective interactions. Finally, he advocates using qualitative transformation as a means of communicating transitions in order to transform the determinism of “master” definitional frameworks (like capitalist relations), opening up an infinite number of potentials within the topology of affective relationships. (Massumi, *Navigating Movements*, 2002)

Massumi qualifies this discussion slightly by addressing the difference between “possibility and “potentiality.” What is *possible* in a given situation is reflective of the structural conditions a body passes through, which are products of relationships extending into the past. Potentials, on the other hand, exist in a virtual realm of imagination within the movement actively occurring and so are not required to adhere to cultural scripts or constraints in the same way. As such, the relationship of possibility to potentiality can be described as the interplay of past and future within movements occurring in the present. He also distinguishes pure “pastness” from history by calling attention to the ways in which history has been constructed. History, he argues, has had a process of becoming and there are affective relationships ensconced within its texts. Massumi believes that “productivist” or consciously creative writing methods can sufficiently account for the layering of realities that comprise the ongoing tension between history/becoming.

I disagree with Massumi on this point. I do not believe that focusing on transitions occurring in an embodied, lived “present” is sufficient to ethically address the “pasts” I believe are attached to our movements. While Massumi acknowledges the intentional construction of history, his treatment of how conditions of privilege result from this construction is inadequate. Privilege is a condition of emergence that arises out of a legacy of relationships extending

hundreds of years into the past, far beyond the reaches of individual memory and lived experience. Therefore an attempt to respond to privilege within the lived experience of a single individual's lifetime will be insufficient. Yet historical accounts of these pasts cannot be blindly employed in the service of ethical imagining processes either because, as Massumi tells us, they are constructed deterministically, to perpetuate coercive power structures. (Massumi, 2002, p. 10) Historical discourses have effectively silenced and excluded the experience of those marginalized within market economies over the years. I argue that this has been accomplished in part by severing relationships within communities that share oral histories and impart embodied knowledges through ritual and subsistence practices.

While the fixation of the body in space and time is an essential condition for the regularity of work conditions (Federici, 2003, p. 143), the capitalist system of post-industrial environments in the global north, whose consumerism fuels corporate profit, relies on creating the illusion that capital is not fixed. (This is due to the increasingly critical state of social and ecological crises resultant from externalization and capitalist profiteering.) (Mitchell, 2003) At the same time, it must, in order to grow, fix capital at increasing rates- especially in the form of resource extraction. This contradiction is maintained through the spatial separation of accumulatory processes and consumptive practices, strong militarism and the over privileging of visual sense. Federici states that "knowledge can only become power if it can enforce its prescriptions" (Federici, 2003, p. 142) Restricting "knowledge" to the intellectual and the visual realms allows for the experiential possibility of citizens in the global north to be severely atrophied and is directly related to the same trajectory that resulted in the mass genocide of women in the 16th century, the disembodiment of production.

The witch trials of 16th and 17th century Europe and the mass genocide that followed not only enforced the enclosure of common lands to facilitate the birth of capitalism, but also established a template for capitalist expansion. This template began a five hundred year trajectory echoed in colonial relationships at the time and continuing to this day, that enslaves the reproductive processes of both humans and the planet and enforces control through violence and murder. Federici asserts that the experiences of enslaved colonized women epitomized violent capitalist practice even more than their European counterparts, since they were denied almost all forms of liberty and demonized not only on account of their sex but also their race. (Federici, 2003, pp. 91-92) Viewed as dialectical trajectories, peasant struggle (and particularly gendered peasant struggle) against accumulatory frameworks like those encapsulated by food sovereignty dialogues as well as the genocide resultant from resistance against enclosure movements emerge as persistent political realities through time, rather than discrete incidents. Rebellions against these elements of capitalist expansion remain the driving forces behind movements like Food Sovereignty, but have been rendered invisible by the processes of disembodiment and disintegration of relational ethics so integral to globalizing capitalist relations.

In being divorced from its body, the “rational” self lost its solidarity with its corporeal reality and with Nature. It also then, lost its ability to act ethically. For ethic, Brian Massumi tells us is always an embodied relation, “the act of inhabiting uncertainty together.” (Massumi, Navigating Movements, 2002) He suggests that if we call the “Openness of an interaction to being affected by something new in a way that qualitatively changes its dynamic nature *relationality*” then advocating a relational ethic is inherently political, a political ecology. The object of this ecology is “the coming together or belonging together of unique and divergent

forms of life...Political ecology is an amoral collective ethics and ethics, is tending of coming together, a caring for belonging.” (Massumi, 2002, pp. 203-205)

It is important to historicize the connections between violence and control over different bodies to creatively problematize how they work to sever “economy” from the movements and experiences of the embodied or “felt” world. Although this is a practical impossibility because what *compels* a body’s movement (energy) and the movement it makes (material action) are inseparable, the use of spatial distance, visual propaganda/manipulation and speed (fueled by hyper-extraction and use of fossil fuels, minerals and metals) effects a virtual segregation. This “accumulation of difference” (Federici, 2003) elicits the compliance of consumer populations and perpetuates violent cycles of primitive accumulation that subjugate all Others, who are either barred from participation in neo-liberal consumerism or rebel against it.

To undertake an ethical movement between points through *textual* communication, I argue that I must simultaneously grapple with the historical relationships that create situational possibility, (especially those that naturalize privilege and desert) as I imagine more equitable and less violent potentials. The process of dismantling of privilege necessitates a re-articulation of Massumi’s notion of “productive” frameworks, whose emphasis on discovery and novelty reinforce capitalist and conquering epistemologies and impair their ethical potential.

Instead, I suggest creativity should be articulated as a re-productive process that allows for the severed connections between pasts and presents as well as between bodies to be healed. Adding the prefix “re” connects creative process with its generation in the past, consciously and intentionally disrupting the notion of authorship. This correction clarifies Massumi’s assertion that reflection and emergence operate in feedback loops, revealing that the earth is less involved in self-augmentation as it is in transformation. This not only valorizes the reproductive role of

relational linkages across time in general but makes a visible alliance with indigenous and agrarian/peasant worldviews that conceive of knowledge as collective. The importance of creativity within this framework is not its novelty, but its ability to sustain life and facilitate healing.

The Earth is often referred to as a “closed system”⁴ this means that even though it exchanges energy with outside sources like the sun, it is never actually engaged in “augmentation” with respect to mass. All life shares the same carbon, nitrogen and oxygen passing it from one body to the next. So, what is often perceived as novelty or new production is in fact matter *transformed* from pre-existent sources. I argue that qualitative conceptualization is also a process of transformation rather than augmentation. Transformation is a multi-directional process, not a linear one. Thus, it involves a continual cultivation of diverse imaginaries. These rely on “seeds” or “slips” of experiential knowledge passed through relational connections across generations to articulate ethical responses to the potentials of unforeseeable events. This is not a descriptive activity located in positionality, but rather, an active way to re-connect the relationality of pasts to embodied presents and imagined futures. By including the past rather than denying it, presents and envisioned futures can more ethically focus on dismantling unearned privilege and repairing damage resultant from the naturalization of violence.

I use the word “re-member” as a methodological hitching post from which to ask critical questions regarding the construction of historical and contemporary eco-food relationships. I conceive of “re-membering” an embodied approach to cultivating relational ethics amongst and

⁴ A closed system is one that transfers energy, but not matter, across its boundary to the surrounding environment. Our planet is often viewed as a closed system” (Pidwirny, 2009)

between humans, place and ecology that includes “revisionist” history.⁵ The root of the English verb “to remember” is Latin: from *mems-* to think about. Like re-production, the “re” tells us it’s something the thinker has done before. So, even in its first imperial context, (i.e. the Romans!) this word is a reminder of the cycles occurring in each of our lives. When I speak of re-membering the word is always hyphenated in my mind, because the potentials for reconfiguring it, not outside its imperial history but in addition to it, become more visible. By playing with memory and “remembering” this research challenges the “truth” of historical pasts, allowing them to be malleable and makes alliances with reproductive methodologies.

Scale is an important component of the re-membering process as well. Rather than approaching global eco-cide and social disintegration on the scale in which global capitalism operates, I suggest in effect that “revolution begins at home.” Along with Denzin and Giroux, I view the cultural experience of everyday life as an opportunity to perform public pedagogy, “a set of recurring interpretive practices that connect ethics, power and politics.” (Giroux, 2007) (Denzin, 2003) Transformative political dialogue and practice organized on very small scales are not only viable manifestations of emancipatory praxis, but integral to approaching concepts such as food sovereignty.

My commitments to processual theory and re-membering methodology made for a perpetually shifting ride when it came to engaging with method. I had originally intended to include both myself and various family members in a formal documentation of re-membering. At first, I proposed to use dialogic interviews and a three faceted journal with poetic, journalistic and spoken words. But these methods did not gel with what my project became after I travelled

⁵ Although the term “revisionist history” has been used by conservative and reactionary authors to support opinions such as Holocaust denial (Antoniou, 2007) I am using it in a much more radical sense. I seek to call attention to the historiography of the trajectories I discuss, calling attention to their constructed nature and suggesting alternative visions of the past which emanate from a consciously anti-colonial/capitalist/racist perspective.

to California. I realized that my research proposal was too large to complete within the established timeline because there was enough to fill volumes with just my own experience. Also, events occurred which made my “social experiment” ideas less appealing than writing about what was happening in my life. I decided to approach the entire thesis autoethnographically.

Perhaps the most concise definition of autoethnography comes from Reed- Danahay. She says, autoethnography is “a form of self narrative that places the self within a social context” (Reed-Danahay, 1997) But autoethnographic research demands a reconfiguration of how individuals orient themselves vis a vis their environment that exceeds the boundaries of narrative construction. Butz asserts that autoethnography is “not a methodology, nor even a set of methods united by a focus on self-representation. Rather, it is an epistemological orientation to the relationships among experience, knowledge and representation”, it is a “sensitivity.”

Addressing both the personal and the broader politics of representation within the self-narrative of autoethnographic representation is key to an eco-ethical methodology like remembering. On one hand engaging in an autoethnographic sensitivity lets me use myself as the primary research subject, but also consciously relies on (and accounts for) my personal interpretations of dialogues and exchanges with intimate others, strangers and the environment. They speak through a voice that is openly translating and aims to be self-conscious. I am always, as Moss relates,

“Accessing and documenting the construction of “I” and “me” in context, multiple contexts...positioning and repositioning and repositioning once again in light of my environments; placing, displacing and replacing myself in the world over and over and over; designing maneuvering, reacting and recording my geography as I live, through my broken arms and illness, through my (small p) politics, through my writing” (Moss, 2000)

Simultaneously, the academic autoethnographer, who is me, is embedded within an institutional structure with a long history of oppressive, racist representations of the expert self and the other. Mary Louise Pratt's conception of autoethnography discusses how this perspective can offer a critique of ethnography when used by the ethnographically represented Other to subvert the "expert" voice. (Pratt, 1994) Unlike the author Pratt describes, I am embedded within systemic structures which ensure my privilege not my exclusion.

Pratt's analysis offers tools for my autoethnographic practice as well. When I recognize the need for ethnography's subversion, by understanding the historical underpinnings of racialized privilege are garnered through violence, theft and genocide, my epistemology changes. I begin to reflect on myself as an agent and a recipient of an unjust and undeserved benefits and a player in the game of race. When applied to the ethical obligations of academic writing, this issue brings representational relationships to the fore front. Such as:

"The capacity of one party to represent another, the capacity of that representation to affect the lives of the people being represented, and the constrained capacity of the people who are the objects of metropolitan representation to intervene in that representation." (Butz, 2009)

I integrate this awareness of method/ology with Denzin's suggestion that auto-ethnography become a performative praxis. He says that as critical inquiry becomes more self-conscious of its cultural embeddedness the academic is compelled to become a public intellectual. Thus a performative autoethnography becomes "a dialogical way of being in the world a way of grounding performances in the concrete" which seeks to cultivate the intellectual as a critical citizen with a "participatory consciousness" which in turn both politicizes and affects everything the autoethnographer communicates. (Denzin, 2003)

My shift towards autoethnography does not lessen the collectively authored nature of my research. The research was/is a group effort, however, the manuscript will be penned by me.

Regardless, of how equally my kin have authored this work, I am the one who will receive some sort of validation for our efforts. Using autoethnography to articulate my research voice I more prominently account for how validity and authorship are rendered in different spheres by different bodies.

Although every encounter is autoethnographic, the thesis' methods/mediums vary as it processes, depending on ethical negotiations that are ongoing in the project's present. For instance, I elected to create a photographic rather than oral or written research journal in order to decrease the contrived aspects of the project as well as a practical response to the demands of my research. This shift opened up a space to practically explore Deleuze and Guattari as well as Massumi's notions of mapping text and active writing with a materially oriented perspective, grounded in experience rather than conjecture. The encounters are also exercises in re-membering as they have been processually created in places both spatially and temporally different from the ones in which their 'original' re-membering took place. But the summer's preserves and pickles are part of the thesis too, the menus, the scribbled notes. They are all what the thesis is and what it is becoming.

Re-membering seeks to incorporate and valorize the work of scholars and practitioners outside Euro-centric academic institutions by modifying the writing methodology Brian Massumi discusses in *Parables of the Virtual* to reflect a commitment to re-productivist methods, tempered by a conscious attempt to dismantle privileged ontologies by engaging with revisionist histories and healing practices. I have outlined four permutations of the re-membering process, which I will briefly relate here.

Re-membering is partly an examination of dominant historical accounts from revisionist perspectives, learning what and who have been excised from the history of food and agriculture.

I took the opportunity of this thesis to work on my own embodied privilege by consciously listening to “subaltern” and indigenous perspectives. I also focused on learning about how nourishment has been treated by different bodies in a consciously “placed” fashion. I am interested in trying to transform some of the ways I know and act in this world, and I’m bound, because I bind myself, to cultivate in myself this ethical respect for the things that nourish. I need help. In my life, I try to listen to the teachings of indigenous peoples and peasants, the “peoples of the land” (Desmarais, 2007) and the land itself. I accord these teachings a place of respect within this project.

Membership, or belonging, is another latent concept within the word re-member. By re-membering, I am also asking that the ways “membership” or belonging is conferred and expressed be shared and explored in this thesis through a relational ethic. This aspect explores the capacity of cultivating kinship relations with both humans and place as a precursor to approaching “food sovereignty” as either a practitioner or an ally. I explored alternative ways of understanding “kinship”, beyond an exclusively human to human phenomenon tied specifically to “blood” relationships that are organized around nuclear family models. This facet also calls attention to the methods by which huge swaths of the earth’s population that have been denied membership- violently disenfranchised and robbed of their sovereignty through processes of accumulation and enclosure. Re-membership stresses the importance of critical race theory and whiteness studies perspectives for scrutinizing eco-food networks.

This was echoed in a few layers of the research process. I looked into California’s past to see how agriculture/search for nourishment was practiced by different bodies- indigenous peoples, white pioneers, immigrant laborers of various races, and all the myriad manifestations of capitalists/ growers. I paid specific attention to how the relationships between people and the

land and amongst people were manifested and tried to decipher what the underlying epistemologies that motivated these actions were. I also looked at how these relationships continue (or don't) to be perpetuated.

I did this through reading and talking with people, but also by participating in nourishment culture, every market I visited, every farm or orchard I passed in a car, each garden, each couple eating in a restaurant- all manner of experiences were potential "fodder" for relating belonging to the context of nourishment. These relationships were not only observed, but tasted, chewed and digested literally and metaphorically- and all were layered and imprinted upon my mind/body as my time in California passed.

The next step was then was to consciously ask questions of myself. (Again- merging the topography of California with the topography of me) How is my nourishment culture shaped? What are its humours? To whom/what can I attribute my tastes, with whom are my experiences, memories, meals shared? How has this changed through time?

Re-membering seeks to draw distinctions between history, the pasts committed to perpetuity through text and memory, the pasts shared between bodies. The word "Member", (aside from its common association with male genitalia), can also denote a limb or body part. Re-membering is an affective engagement with regenerative processes. It involves re-building a body of ecological knowledge, healing the body of the earth and reaffirming collective memory, all of whom have suffered from industrial capitalism.

Finally, Re-membering is about reconnecting with multiple senses, using the verb remember in unorthodox senses of the word, but also exploring sense itself: what "makes sense" and what senses we use as we configure knowledge. Eco-food relationships and healing practices are discussed metaphorically and metonymically via storytelling processes that use various

mediums. The research was also equally (and perhaps more so) engaged with embodied non-textual experiences like cooking and eating together, gardening, camping, canning, playing etc.

These aspects of the methodology were my favorite parts of the thesis process. I spent a lot of time outside. I looked for the remnants of California's "pre-capitalist" ecosystems, I watched birds, learned trees- in short became aware of the vast amount of ecological knowledge I do not currently possess regarding my homeland. I tried to build it. I did this with my family, especially my sister Caitlin.

I am making plans with my family to get their house "off the grid"- grey-water systems, solar energy, subsistence gardens and the like. I also sought out stories from people- or rather, in the midst of my journey these stories seemed to seek me out- everywhere I went- the bus, the river, the pickle sale- people wanted to talk about being fed, how the landscape had been changed, and those they had known in their lives who possess knowledge about the land and how to live in harmony with it.

My sister, cousin and I decided to go into "business" this summer as well, mostly because none of us, for our own varied reasons could get "real" jobs. In part this was because one of the children my sister formerly 'au-pair'ed for in Paris came (now 14 years old) to stay with us. We decided to make pickles and preserves- it's something I've done before for money with decent success. We also decided to keep our eyes and ears open for free produce.

What began as an over coffee conversation became "Midge and Birdy's" and led to a host of thesis relevant events: wild food gathering, material concerns, capitalist participation, preserving and, teaching. While we amassed and produced our stock, lots of people came to our house to learn about what we were doing (ages ranging from 6 to 50). Since I'm the only one

who pickles in my family a lot of this teaching fell to me. All of the work was done pretty communally- our family just does stuff that way, but that, as I've mentioned is another chapter.

There was also a macabre aspect to this bodily re-building- there were ghosts, and plenty; horrors so close to the present they have only just slipped out of the memories of living humans. Some horrors are ongoing. There are fresh scars. There are open wounds. Now I am a collage of all of these. Sutured. Hope and grief are embedded now. They are like arteries and veins sending inspiration and despair back and forth from limb to heart. I am marked with the topography of a pastness thick with voices. It is visible, it shadows my movements.

This area of re-membering also calls for the healing of severed connections between people and within individuals themselves. Since I am ultimately interested in transforming attitudes and relationships resultant from participation in global capitalism, I also suggest that reparation be an integral part of this process. I believe that the integration of a "healing practice" is one of the most important aspects of the Re-membering process. Using a philosophy garnered from 15 years of personal experience studying herbalism and holistic healing, I suggest that there are ways to "practice healing" that challenge constructions of disease and health by disputing concepts like expertism, purity and cures existent within dominant medical models.

I conceive of healing as an intrinsically nourishing process rather than an attempt to rid a body of a contagion or impurity. The difference here, is perspective based. Healing involves re-connections between a body and its experience of wholeness and health rather than severance from a pathogen that infects it. Health is accessible to everyone and healers do not require accreditation from institutions, only experience. Dis-ease becomes a signifier rather than state of being, not something to be eradicated, but indicative of an element that needs nourishment and can be learned from.

My conceptualization of healing is also grounded in the herbal tradition of using “simples”, which I have practiced for over a decade. “Simples” are gentle plant based remedies composed of a few easily gathered ingredients available from local sources utilizing widely accessible methods of preparation. Simple herbalism advocates cultivating intimate relationships with a few plants and learning how they work as allies to heal humans. (Weed, 1989) This is accomplished by sharing stories and experiences with others, listening to one’s own body and, perhaps most importantly communicating with the plants themselves. The epistemologies that advocate the use of simples and the healing practices that accompany them are most often communicated orally and through practice, and therefore the texts which address them are not necessarily the best means by which to understand them.

The integration of a conceptual discussion of “healing practice” into this thesis document has proved very difficult. I find that my intuitive understanding and practice of herbalism is not easily translated into text. My knowledge is based on stories, time spent in the woods and fields observing and gathering, learning about the efficacy of remedies through trial and error, and sometimes, a sense that I have about a plant or a person that motivates my suggestions for healing. It is above all, a situational practice, dependent on where I am, what time of year it is, how I or the person asking for help feels. There are no universal rules except the need to reconnect severed links between things and to more fully understand how plants and people and place are related. As I weave the plants I learn about into my own and others bodies we become more balanced because we become known to one another. We have become kin, again. Remembering is a way to affirm this kinship and to repair the breaks centuries of “scientific” knowledge have torn in the fiber of humans’ relationship with the green world.

This thesis is in many ways a record of healing practice, but it hardly ever articulates itself that way. Acquiring herbal sensibilities and forging kinship bonds are not immediate. And... I suppose that I am comfortable enough to share that I am a “plant person”, but not enough to bring my relationship with medicine fully into the University’s eye.

Nevertheless, plant medicine is something I do. It is always with me. So, I went out in search of healing. I spoke to the plants. I participated in healing practice. This most often involved admitting how much more I need to learn. To do. Each question opened up more questions. This to me is how healing manifests. Its goal is not to stop the symptoms but to nourish what hunger prompts the response we call dis-ease. There is no cure. Still, I remain committed to my belief in “health as journey.” This thesis is triage, the first visit to a new practitioner. It takes stock of the shape and intensity of the gash, it cleans the wound, prepares the spirit and flesh for the long process of repair.

Orientations

There are two main objectives for this project. One is to create a testament to using embodied multisensory methods in research that transform allegiance to global capitalism and cultivate kinship on intimate levels. There are countless “memory holders” engaged in this process at present, and they, and their ancestors before them, have been valiantly defending their right to act as stewards for millennia. There are also other authors within the academic institution that have discussed this. On many accounts then, I am not the first, to suggest these connections. I make no novel claims. I reject novelty completely.

To the “traditional” “academic” eye, this project might seem novel. Well... unconventional, alright...radical. It seeks to stretch “boundaries” and challenge “rules” on

multiple fronts. Foundationally, these differences emanate from my commitment to work from a creation-based perspective, one un-committed to a mode of production. There's a different level of abstraction in producing things- it's a qualified pursuit, there is a definable goal. I am not letting go of agency, I am cultivating response-ability. I seek to find material ways to begin the process of approaching life/work grounded in creation oriented frameworks.

This thesis is only original to the extent that it attempts its second objective, that is, to chronicle the journey of one particular body navigating space. More specifically, it seeks to elucidate this body's approach to the complexities of subsistence displacement and the journey of embracing food sovereignty while actively engaging with embodied histories and racialized privileges garnered through genocide, control and violence.

The title begins the challenge, playing on the tensions and rhythms of community life, sacrality and re-membering histories, ecologies and relationships in my birthplace. This thesis is evident of many moments which imply movement, negotiation. I found that when I walked this thesis journey that each step changed me. Walking was, as Massumi says a unique experience of "the body's movement against falling." As I walked I became more and more committed to respond 'processually' to experiences that occurred this summer in California and convey them both poetically and autoethnographically.

Although the topical foci of my thesis project have remained constant, its conceptual shape and method have changed greatly over the course of its construction. In fact, it continues to change. Overall I have found it difficult to rein the project inside the boundaries of "what a thesis is" according to the Grad Studies Handbook. The reasons for this are multiple. Both ecological ethic and poetic intelligence demand consistent, responsible engagement with one's work that defy structures and deadlines. Louise Gluck speaks to this when she says, "Poetic

intelligence lacks focused investment in conclusion, being naturally wary of its own assumptions. It derives its energy from a willingness, in fact, to discard anything.” (Gluck, 1993)

Each narrative remains unfinished in essence, and committed to each detail as a narrative within it itself because experimentation rather than completion must be my primary occupation if I am to remain true to my processual goals. Massumi says that if you want to re-invent concepts or connections between concepts the “first rule of thumb is simple: don’t apply them” but employ an exemplary method.

“This can be done by extracting them (concepts) from their usual connections to other concepts in their home system and confronting them with an example or detail from it. The activity of the example will transmit to the concept, more or less violently. The concept will start to deviate under the force. Let it. Then reconnect it to other concepts, until a whole new system of connection starts to form. Then, take another example. See what happens. Follow the new growth. You end up with many buds. You have made a systemlike composition prolonging the active power of the example.” (Massumi, 2002, pp. 18-19)

In my narrative works I have tried to follow Massumi’s advice, and have often experienced the “terrible powers of deviation and digression” harbored in each example, the possibility for a detail to take over and shift the course of the project. My thesis walks a thin line, it plays with being uncontrolled, embraces unwieldiness. I know that this could compromise its legitimacy.

To honor what I have learned however, I have resolved not to pay too much attention to accreditation politics, I must do what represents my journey best. I have researched my life without separating myself from it and come to believe that the difference between “life” and “research” is recognition, not necessarily depth or expertise. The recognition of academic

accolades or of legitimacy is conjured here, as well as the “legibility” of my self as a “knowledge maker” to different people and environments I move through.

By sifting through geographies that inscribe their legacies on earthly bodies I have learned much about what has been hidden by the cultures of control. Not only the horrors it buries, but also the creative triumphs it obfuscates. I am learning that I live on a planet of many cords. Of almost infinitesimal umbilici. That birth, whether of animate beings or creative ideas, is possible anywhere. There is no limit to the number of creations that can exist and there is no time limit as to how long it will take. Everything is related *and* everything responds uniquely.

My continually changing perspectives are visibly constructed, some of them overtly “made up.” This is emphatically *not* to exonerate myself- I suppose it is to entertain...as in, I am entertaining this thesis, this downbeat, this proposition. I don't want anyone to “buy” it. But secretly, (if I am honest) I hope you like the show. That's not to say that these creations aren't significant of intellectual effort or depth. Creations, academic or otherwise, ask for an alternate and infinitely various set of evaluatory practices from products. Because creation is just that way. Its ongoing, wholly different from the linear rules of evolution and capitalism...It encounters magic in the sacred materiality of life- AND- It is endlessly (or at least perennially) negotiated.

Not every thing covered in these narratives will be explained. The breadth of events and the actual substantive chronology of California's eco-agricultural history, for instance, cannot be included in toto. I hint at it, provide you with clues, but never say it outright. I want to touch other parts of your understanding. Massumi suggests that if an attempt to experiment processually with text and method succeeds, “You have left your readers with a very special gift, a headache. By which I mean a problem: what to do with it all.” At the end of the day though, he concludes that “That's their problem. [by which he means *yours*, dear reader,]

That's where their experimentation begins. Then the openness of the system will spread. *If* they have found what they have read compelling. Creative contagion." (Massumi, 2002, p. 19) I know there is a lot of material to wade through, I am trusting that you will chose to spend your time perusing the aspects of this project that touch you the most. And really, I *am* sorry about the headaches, but I do hope you find this compelling.

Listen, they used to begin things this way,

"Once there was, and once there was not"

There are no truths to follow.

Listen, it is mockery, but it is not just mockery.

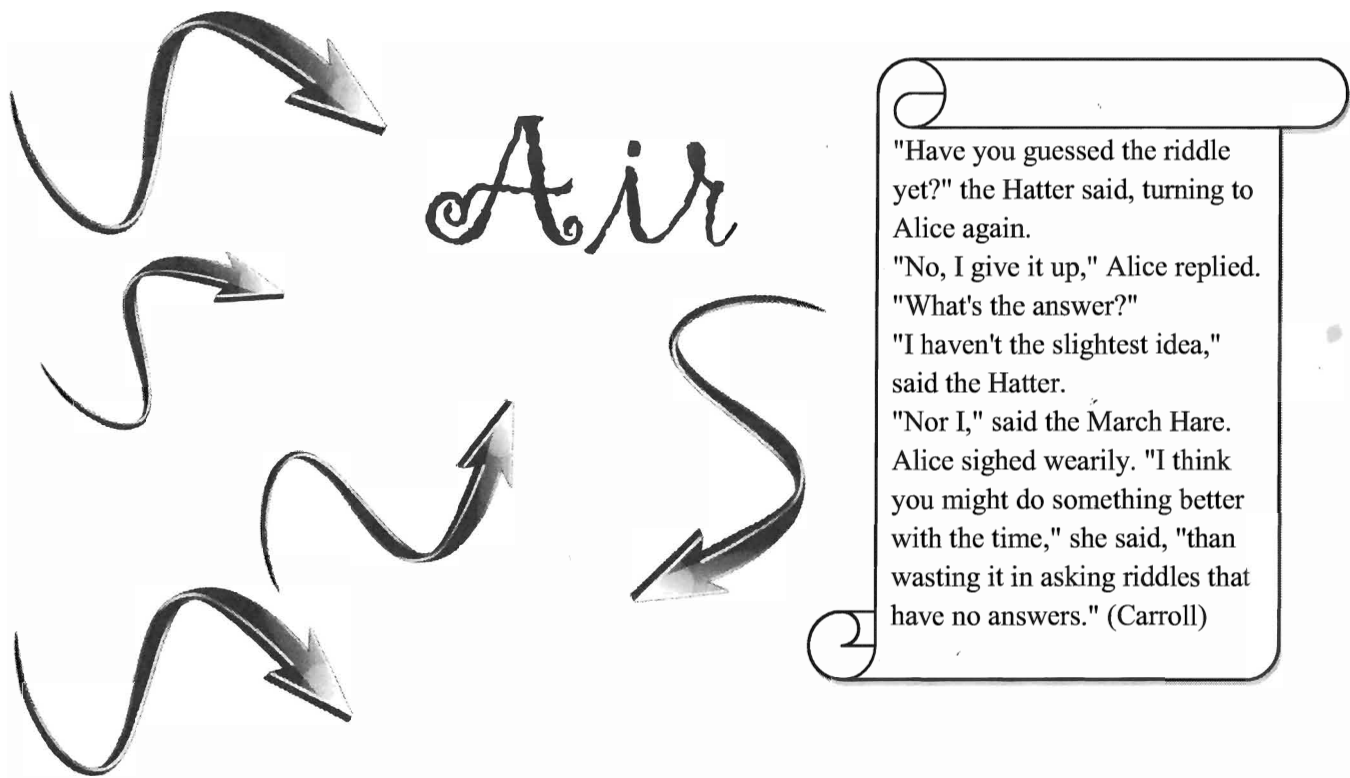
I am unfinished.

Work is processual.

Listen,

I am stories.

And stories change.



"Time is a child at play. A child playing at dice." - Herakleitos

Guide to the Element

Air is the element of intellect and thought. How does your mind jump from one lily pad to the other? Think about it. In the atmosphere there are particles of everything:- you, me, industrial waste, stardust. All of these particulates are mobile. The wind gives them wanderlust. Moving invisibly for the most part, they are like our gypsy dendrites. Air morphs. It is as unpredictable as spring. Air can be sharp, like the icy chill that blows between the Great Lakes and whistles down the sternum of Niagara's January. It seduces with the sweet zephyrs of early summer. Air is laden with linden scent and roses. Air howls in a hurricane. Whines like a banshee in Hallow'een chimneys. It loves a costume. Air has academic regalia. What is the truth of wind? Air speaks in riddles. Now we play games. Meet the jester.

The Encounter

The elemental encounter with Air was supposed to jest with theory and teach about praxis... Never make plans with a trickster. This encounter wants to do those things. As it emerges, however, Air also appears to want to talk about impermanence, negotiation, process, and the dangers of writing one's own fiction. Even though I knew this project would become unwieldy, I figured it would all be "done" when my time in the program was finished. And then I had a veritable tempest of a brainstorm, sometime in February of 2008. I decided to write an autoethnographic fairytale to explain my research praxis. So I began.

I thought that writing a fairy tale would be an excellent medium for someone wrestling with her European settler heritage and delving into subsistence displacement. Fairy-tales are the remnants of pagan cultures, the gestures of story that survived the Burning Times. In addition, writing an obviously whimsical and fictional account of my research process struck me as an apt method to visibilize the petticoats of theoretical language by unabashedly displaying my findings as made up.

But the process of fictionalizing a life is not a quick one. As the structural bones of the tail began to peek out it became clear that it might extend a ways. Perhaps beyond the boundaries of the thesis deadline. Hmph. So it is a book. I didn't want it to be, but it is. Or perhaps a serialized work that can continue on indefinitely. In any case, the end of the tail is "not yet". Its conclusion occurs after the end. What follows are three chapters of the story followed by detailed records of where the rest of the tail process is at. There are plot treatments in various stages of complexity. Sketches. Notes. It is a flexible piece, it changes every week. The encounter with Air made me realize that each elemental narrative had to offer a processual

snapshot into the creation process, because all of them were too intricately conceived to be finished within a thesis' time constraints..

CAVEAT: I recognize that submitting unfinished works might impede their comprehensibility somewhat. I am also aware that submitting unfinished work might be read as a joke for which there might be consequences. I suppose in the end I am comfortable with those risks.

There's really no other way to embody processual method, is there? Of course I am being a bit tongue and cheek here - this is the 'humour' of Air coming out. Air jests. It plays with mental capacities and boundaries, codes event and ideas into riddles that poke fun at their own constructedness.

So, here follows the Airy Fairy's Tail. This story is the most autobiographical and the most fictionalized of all the elemental projects. It is an affirmation of my Airy Fairy-ness and it is not ashamed. Though it is sometimes sheepish and often humbled. If I am honest, the Tail is mostly a settling of a huge debt of gratitude to many of the characters who appear in the story. It is a thank-you -you-are -magical-to-me letter. It is also partly an argument riddled with my own hang ups regarding academic legitimacy and the confusion I feel about my own class membership. Finally, it is a offering/proposal to my sister Caitlin. Not only did she and I literally write our lives back together last year, we have also been tossing around the idea of writing books or graphic novels for some time. This encounter is also to say, "I am ready to embark on this."

This is not really a work authored by me- although I am all over it for sure. It is collectively written, it emerges depending on the characters present in my life and what happens to us. It needs cross continental phone calls too. I cast my life's characters somewhat

archetypically, preferring to highlight specific characteristics rather than paint 'authentic' portraits. I mix and match real life traits amongst people . This renders them caricatures, not necessarily of themselves, but of the way I perceive them and their relationship to the fiction of my life.

So the fairy's tale mocks on several levels. Here memory is a puppet show. Here the clown takes the stage. I think it's a story first and foremost. But it is many other things as well. It is a fable wrapped in events that have been metaphorically tinkered with. These things did happen. This is an autoethnographic rendition of the thesis' field work lessons, to be sure. But the tale also carries different velocities? layers? currents? directions? of meaning depending upon how well you get the references, and how intimate your relationship is with me. Here the joke of reflexivity is told. Every phrase is meant to be thick, sticky with portent and each aims to spring off the tongue nonetheless. I am a character and the teller of the tale. This is rosily concocted. Sometimes levity is required to bend deep things into communication. Humour softens and sharpens simultaneously. Ready. Set. One, two... Wheeeee!!!!!!!!!!

THE FIRST STORY: IN WHICH WE MAKE INTRODUCTIONS
AND BEGIN TO TELL THE TALE...

It was not a dark and stormy night. It was not deep in the knarled woods of your mythic imagination. It was not once upon a moonlit time. It was none of those things. Rather, it was on a lovely sunlit morning, around ten o'clock, when the day was just-licking the edges of the warmth it would hurl itself towards a few hours later, when Oblivia, Responsible Jack and the Aquaricorn sat down on the front porch of their common sanctuary with their respective beverages to discuss their troubles. But perhaps you are not ready to hear all that is wrong in the world of the Pea Green Castle on the Tree Lined Street of Possibility. Or why these most disparately inclined creatures were gathered together, both giggling and glum. Or even how it was that they came to be where they found themselves that day. Perhaps you are more of a proper sort, and would like to be introduced first. Very well, We are not adverse to decorum- we shall oblige you.

We suppose that we should begin with ourselves...We, used as in the Royal We, but without the aristocratic tendencies, are the Storyteller. If you need more of an explanation than that, (and you might if you live anywhere in the neighborhood of Theory St. or Science Ave. or in proximity to the Mall of Technological Wonders and Other Inconveniences) We suppose you could say that we are the voice that lives inside of you. We narrate your every step as the unfolding of a fairy's tail, changeable, epic and stuffed to the brim with the reality of magic. Do you know us now? If we were honest, we would note that our particular intonation was the result of knocking about in one particular character's mind. There is no doubt that what we think and how we speak has been influenced by her. No, no, we are not speaking prescriptively of course- the Storyteller answers to no matter bound body. But ah! The rhythms and rolls of Miss Oblivia Imogene Revelrie,

the deliciously muddy stumble and jounce of her! Let us just say that they are everywhere imprinted on us.

And who, might you ask is Miss Oblivia Revelrie? Who indeed! Mistress of Nowhere In Particular she was, an Ambler and a Stitcher of Things both Textiled and Metaphoric. Permanent holder of this year's Poetic License, a Bubbler, rather inclined to Wonder and sometimes to Pontificate. Oblivia was all of these things. And also, and perhaps most important for this story, Oblivia was an Alchemist of Flavor and a Preserver of Items Ephemeral , which is to say edible and not made of words.

Seated next to her, in an obligatorily striped shirt, was the Not Publicly Renowned but Mysteriously Legend Pirate of the Infinite Seas. Yes. None other than She. Responsible Jack, Captaine of the Ship Temptation. She of the Dreamy Wandering Eye and the Unshakeable Sense of Obligation. Her travels were extensive, her sensitivities weepy and her sense of direction fondly erratic. She was as Intuitive a Swabber as ever trod the plank, mysterious at times and taciturn by nature with a tongue so wittily garbled that sometimes, only a Broth of Scrambled Thesaurus and Madcap Mushrooms could aid the listener in its deciphering.

Lounging impossibly in her iron chair, somehow present and betwixt the realm of Arcady, there was, and there was not, the descant of our morning trio. A creature, not quite human and not quite fée. Born as the stars and planets slid from Goat-Fish to Waterbearer, the slightly detached, somewhat always tipsy and ever lovely Aquaricorn. With elfin eyes the color of spring mud and jonquil pollen and horns that hovered on the edge of mattering and invisibility; she was a precisely misty combination of dervish and stone. Earthy and practical as she was flighty and often sometimes not really there at all.

There. Now that your thirst for social mores has been fulfilled, I trust I may continue? Where were we...oh yes, morning, sunlight, beverage, commiseration. Make no mistake about it, the world only affords the humdrummily domestic gathering of such mythical souls when travesty is afoot. And Travesty, in her boisterous and nonchalant way, had trounced all over our heroines as of late.

The pirate for her part, was as blue as the ocean is afloat with barges of rubbish. For the ship Temptation had beached itself upon the shores of the most unromantical moat yet. With out so much as a "by your leave" rJ's vessel had heaved itself castleward like a Comic-kaze Cetacean. (This return was owing perhaps to a lack of treasure hunting - rJ's responsibility never allowed her to pillage much) And now rJ was moored, like it or not, bereft of her both her first and second mates, (a touchy subject neither of her compatriots dared breach) land legs throbbing, with only the memoried scent of island rum (and a fair bit of stolen whisky in her coffee, we suspect) to remind her of her previously carefree self.

Oblivia eyed rJ's cup with both suspicion and envy, (having forgotten to steal whisky from the castle's stores herself), but resigning herself to the singular joy of coffee, (and sighing theatrically), she tipped her cup to her mug, frowning as she did so. It was not that Oblivia was insensible to the beauty of the morning. It was mostly that she was groggy, (having hurtled across the continent in too immediate a time), and rather broken about the heart spaces (having been rudely awakened to the unliklihood of true love only just recently). In fact, most of her insides, she was fairly sure, were lollygagging somewhere over Kansas.

This was mostly the result of having too hastily caught a wind for travel. The wind was so unzephyrlike as to be laughable and although it facilitated her exodus from the Dungeons of

Disappointment where she had been languishing for some weeks, and although it had transported her with great expediency, there had been but little tenderness in the journey. So little, that now, confronted with the golden hills and leafy sycamores of that country where the Pea Colored Fortress stood, she could only wallow in the soreness of her joints and with precious little bravado, extol the virtues of permanent bachelorhood.

The Aquaricorn said but little, paying the strictest attention to her morning repast of chocolate and champagne. Still, rJ and Oblivia did not fail to notice that two parts of the Aquaricorn's body were flickering in and out of materiality, which was always a sign that the dear thing was troubled. Today, it was the patch on the left side of her chest, where some might posit, emotion was lodged. That, and a bit of her head, precisely at the point in which the cracked up phrenologists of old say that, "career concerns" are located. Additionally, they caught the twinkle of two strings of unfamiliar gems wrapped about the creature's horns, which were out in splendor this particular morning.

It was rJ who broke the silence, she led out with a string of gibberish- to help everyone relax, "In offen sloughs the birdy chimes and asks to whet the secrets wait!" and, pausing to let the full effect of her brilliance seep in, she followed with the more plausible question, "Well, Quara- don't make us guess! Where did you get them?"

Scarcely moving her focus from sweets and liquor, she raised a silken eyebrow, "Get what?"

And Oblivia tumbled in, "The pretty things you're wearing! Oh, I'll bet it was a story! But which plot was it? Did he sigh kisses forever? Did she die and leave you everything? Was it a great escape? Were there bandits to fear?"

Her answer was cool, but her chest was completely absent from it, "He did, she isn't dead. And there is no escape. Arcady has

evicted me. They appeared yesterday morning and...As long these trinkets stay here” she pointed. “I am tethered to this plain old plane.” And with a swig from her flute she went back to her breakfast.

“Well that’s terrible!...Cannot you just?” Oblivia began. But mid-crunch the Aquaricorn countered “If I could, do you not think I would have so already? They are firmly fixed. Even if my horns stayed in being I couldn’t remove these baubles. Nope. It’s mortality from here on out girls. Mortality, chastity, and No. More. Fun.” she hiccupped, and despite her ladylike stifling, pink orbs full of fancy and fibs escaped from her lips.

“HAH!” Said rJ. “She quips with fortitude the price of teething but fairy’s farther, and disfrequently found, that’s what I say.” And she danced a coffee jig learned in the jungles of Somewhere Warmer. Breathless, but not the least bit tired she began again “We’re in a heap o’ heartache ladies, what’s to be done?”

STORY #2: IN WHICH OBLIVIA, RJ AND THE AQUARICORN
GET A VISIT FROM AUNT FLORA AND AUNTY FAIRYWHETHER

rJ waited patiently, but no one answered her. Of such magnitude was their collective slump that even the bird twitter flying about the breakfast table stammered. So, according to a long standing tradition at the castle, the champagne bottle was passed. Each gulped accordingly and duly snickered. But it was short-lived. There are some things even the bubble and squeak of Tattinger cannot mend. Sometimes more stimulating syrup is called for. So, rJ dug about in the endless folds of her jacket and produced, among other things, a cigar from its infinite pockets. She then proceeded to douse it with a splash of late harvest Armagnac. Finally it was lit, with a kerosene lamp, culled once again from the depths. Puffing lazily until the cherry was rosy red, she moved to pass it around.

She never got the chance. All of a sudden they noticed that the morning's lazy amble towards noon was trembling. That the leaves of the placid sycamores were doing a hurdy gurdy with their branches. Our three heroines (because they will become so, have no fear) sat up from their slump. They cocked their ears to listen. They paused. They looked about. There was a whirring approaching the castle. A wild whipping gust spiraling out of nowhere in particular. It was a tornado...wasn't it? There was a whiny roar of air currents to be sure, the crackling whoosh of debris riding the ferris wheel of wind. But, in addition to the bits of twig and leaf, the dirt and the odd bovine, visible in its twirling there were glimpses of other things- curls, for example, chiffon, and the overtones of a distinctly sibilant argument.

and so on.

Now it was clear. Who else, they thought, could it be? In any case, the storm was directionally intent and fast approaching the front porch. Oblivia lifted her head, nose twitching towards the spinning mass, now hurtling up the stairs and said “I’d know the smell of that tornado anywhere” she threw open her arms, leaping from the table (spilling the champagne) and laughed, “Aunt Flo! Auntie Whether!”

She was prevented, however, from embracing anything due to the distinctly lengthy process of disentanglement the "tornado" was undergoing. While the trees had given up their wild cavorting, the gyrating twister had by no means ceased. What's more, an assortment of Things began to fly out of it! The air was full of whizzing thingamabobs and whatnots for a bit. But after the exodus (of tea sets, armoires, silk scarves, houseplants, picnic baskets, telescopes and books) had flitted sufficiently about the girls' heads, they settled themselves in frowzy heaps around the porch, as if they'd been expected. And then, at last, the squall began to fold in upon itself. A crevice, which grew to a crack and then a chasm, opened up.

First a foot, tanned and sensible in shape, but shod in the most impractically heeled and bejeweled sandal you've ever seen came into view. It was followed by another, from the opposing side- this one tiny and square, with toes shaped into spades from being pushed into too many wiggly granny boots in its youth- distinctly uncomfortable in its bare state, peeked out. They each sought the ground and upon contact, seemed to lock on to the magnetic pull of the very Earth. Each foot weighted itself, flatly anchored to the stone porch, plotting against the whirling tempest. And then, refuting Sir Isaac Newton in a dozen ways, amidst a flood of objects d'art and living things, the gale sputtered like a wet candle, and two smallish figures emerged, with a cow calmly chewing its cud in between.

They were as unlike as a magpies and giraffes. As different as the shades of green in summer. But there was also something distinctly similar about their eyes, the flick of their wrists, the way they drank the air like gilled fish inhale water that told you they were related. Fairywhether was brown as a nut and thin as a wire. Her brilliantly white hair corkscrewed maniacally about her face and every so often a little surge of electricity would bolt from one of its

ends, making her twitch, ever so slightly. Her face was wrinkled with smiling and she had merry eyes like drops of amber. It was hard to tell exactly how tall she was because the sheer fabric that enveloped her swirled about like liquid and smoke, the color of sea and clouds.

Her companion was as round and soft as she was angular. Flora was painted with an impressionists touch. Her skin was fair and unlined, almost too soft. Her mouth was rose and briared, pouty and pursed too often. Hair straight, plentiful and course, like sheaves of buckwheat and eyes like glacial pools, crisply clean and brightly turquoise. Where Whether was sheer she was opaque. She was dressed in brocaded silk that fell in the precisely draped curves of season's change and color. Running ran her impossibly miniature hands across her most ample thighs and sending off a cloud of sparkle and dust, she stamped her tiny foot and said, "Now where have my shoes gotten to? Honestly Whether, what use is a wind if it leaves you barefoot? Hello girls, Oblivia would you take this cow somewhere? And you two" she nodded. "Help me find them?"

And so, without further ado, Oblivia led the cow out to the back to graze and the rest of the assembly began to rifle through the piles of furniture and fabrics. "What are we looking for exactly?" Inquired the Aquaricorn, who was deep in conversation with the contents of an ancient armoire. The closet had rather a mind of its own. As soon as she pulled something out the armoire would suck it back in again with such force that she almost toppled in after it. "Is it a Brogue? Slipper? Sandal?" called Oblivia, returning from the yard.

"It's a boot" sang Fairywhether running her hands through a bowl of beads, "A brutish kicky boot, two of them in fact. And it wasn't the wind at all that took them, it was me. Hmmm, it may have been lost. I threw it out somewhere a ways back." She looked at her fingernails, suddenly bored.

“You what?”

“It squashed my foot”

“I squashed your foot, not the shoe”

“Well it’s too hard to throw you out when we’re travelling, it’s so hard to stop on one’s own”

Their bickering went on like this at some length, growing in pitch until the tempest threatened to reconvene. That is until rJ’s saber lit upon something hard and heavy in the pile of antique lace that had arranged itself on the breakfast table. “Aha!” She cried, “A stop to step these sniping sororials!” “I think I’ve found them!” At that the argument stopped abruptly. Flora sailed over, whispering something about feet on the table. She settled into Oblivia’s chair, scarcely giving her time to vacate it, and set to lacing her bare toes into comfortable modesty again.

Fairywhether proceeded to the Armoire where The Aquaricorn was still struggling. She stroked it’s latch lightly and it calmed, springing open with an audible sigh. Quara shrugged and accepted the stacks of china Fairywhether was tossing recklessly into her arms. She then disappeared, in a trail of sooty chiffon, deep into the closet’s depths. There followed a sound of breaking glass, at which Flora rolled her eyes, and an icy breeze which made everyone shiver. After several minutes, Fairywhether climbed out again, holding a large bowl of ice cream and a pitcher of milk.

“Shall we?” she tittered.

“Oh yes please!” Flora replied, smiling.

“Girls” they said in unison. “How lovely to see you, would you care for some ice cream?”

To eat a bowl of ice cream is always a pleasure, but to eat a bowl of ice cream with The Sisters Flora and Fairywhether, is an epic event. Our three heroines were, of course, well aware of these festive possibilities and nodded eagerly. By now the china

Fairywhether had lobbed towards the Aquaricorn had set itself about the breakfast table, the previous assortment of mugs and bottles having somewhat inexplicably been whisked away to parts unknown. The party sat down to feast.

It was a pretty picture. The sun's light was higher now, and came sifting through the sycamore branches towards the porch. Some of it caught on the floor and set to dancing with the shadows, while other bits sparkled on the china plates or alit on the various girlish heads, refracting into prisms of red and gold and dark light. Flora produced a silvery scoop from the pocket of her dress and was about to take the bowl from Fairywhether's hands, when an errant sunbeam struck her full on in the eye. She snorted, daintily, and then, to no one's surprise, addressed the giant tree that stood in front of the castle. "Oh Ramona, would you? I'd appreciate it ever so" And the great branches shifted slightly, so that Flora's face was more shaded.

She sighed, "that's better. Now, where were we? Ah yes..." And she dipped the scoop precisely into the three o'clock spot of the ice cream bowl, flicked her wrist and lifted a perfectly spherical mound of snowy confection all flecked with vanilla bean out. Just as it began to slide out of its silver cradle, Fairywhether met the scoop of cream with a bowl and, in a flawlessly timed waltz of movement, splashed a healthy dollop of creamy milk over the waiting orb and slid the whole thing across the table to rJ's waiting arms. This process was seamlessly repeated until five tiny icebergs all swimming in frothy cream were placed in front of each participant. All were now breathless with anticipation, but the time was not ripe. "Now we count!" said Fairywhether. "Everyone together now, it doesn't work if you don't play along"

And so they chanted:

“One for the grass that grows in your dreaming”

“Two for the tending of cows and of cud”

“Three for the milk that nourishes gleaming”

“And Four for the boots that keep out the mud”

“Five for the starlight that hastens the churning”

“Six for the moon that lent you the bowl”

“Seven the sisters who taught you the learning”

“Eight for the keys the fairyland stole”

*“Nine is the number of sugar’s complexities,
telling you always to temper the sweet”*

*“And Ten is the end of our rhyming and counting
Hurry! Don’t dawdle! It’s time now to eat!”*

And they did. First they grasped the tiny teaspoons suddenly resting at the top of each place setting and, turning the ice cream so that the bottom end was now on the top, the circle resounded with five simultaneous intakes of astonished breath.

“It doesn’t matter how many times it happens” The Aquaricorn mused, “I always gasp”

“Miracles should be miraculously received, dear” said Whether smiling.

I suppose you are wondering what there could be in a dish of ice cream to make our company react so? Well...somewhere betwixt the alchemy of dip, serve and spell, a rather extraordinary metamorphosis had taken place within the humbly icy bowls. Where the frozen globes had been smooth and lustrous as pearls they were now covered in glittering crystals. The contradiction of their velvety insides and the spiny armadillos of their new shells all vanilla flavored and lusciously rich, was too much temptation for our group- they tasted. They clapped. They lost themselves in dairied delights.

Amidst the clang of teaspoons against porcelain, the odd sigh, and the silken pop only crystallised cream can make on your tongue, Flora began to speak.

"Well my dears, have you surmised" she paused to lick the back of the spoon. "Why we came today?" The girls looked at one another, although visits from their Aunties were always fun- they also often came with a barrage of haranguing and loud advice which was less so. Flora however did not wait for a response and continued,

"Its not as if you're fooling anyone- its like a neon sign- Internal chasms are wretchedness incarnate! Joy is an actress lovie, she wears a masque to the theater that more than slightly resembles her sister, Sufferance. They have the same clothier. And you're all wearing her designs, I'd know the cut o' sorrow's cloth anywhere." She dug, with relish at the icy mound and continued, her tongue thick with cream and vanilla, "It's got to be remedied my melancholy maudlins-you verge on useless, drunken and squashed as you are."

"Now quit bristling" she said eyeing the growing indignation that had slowed the ice-creamy ecstasy to a grinding halt. "And listen. By and by you'll see I'm right. Of course, you won't do it moping round here, will you? No matter how close the truth sleeps to you. Hmm...There's nothing for it- you'll have to travel."

"It's rulership if you ask me, Whether," she said, inclining her head in the direction of her sister but not really making eye contact "All that cold caluclating control, it's never the answer, just another recipe that plugs up the veins, planetary or human, its all one right? And what that does to growth!"

She sighed, turned back to the girls "It never works. The old monarchy's got to change-it needs, but it doesn't know it, try softening, a bit of warmth and honey, memory's good for that -You know? Look inward, or northward as the case may be, and soon - we'll send you direc..."

And then Flora saw her, “Oh no! But it can’t be, she promised it wasn’t time for...ooooh!” She banged her tiny fist on the table, “Hold on everyone! Look to the weather!”

“You mean look at Auntie Whether?” inquired Oblivia.

“I mean whether you look at Whether or Weather, the sunlight’s hit her” she pointed at her sister. “straight on and she can’t keep sane when it’s so direct. Oh, it’s all my fault, I never should have asked Ramona for shade.” Flora wrung her hands and crawled under the table.

Fairywhether, on the other hand, was sitting stock straight in her chair, eyes bulging, looking odder and more twitchy by the minute. Her lips shuddered and sparks flew in alarming rapidity from the ends of her hair, an eruption was surely brewing.

When she finally spoke it was in the thin reedy shriek of a hurricane, “Youuuuuuuuuuuu!”

She made a sweeping gesture with her arms to encompass all three of the much astonished women who were fixated, unable to move, on the spectacle. “You! You lack!” And then, she began to sway, cobra like, gearing up for the next verbal explosion, “I currrrrrrse you!”

“Oh dear lord! Not again” moaned Flora from below.

“With rainstorms of youth you shall be hailed. Drown or swim in the deluge I shall visit upon you! With hauntings of folly your dreams will be laced, bring your vision’s steps into waking life at your peril! I will show you how gratitude is fashioned!” And as she lifted her hands, cackling madly, the wind began to pick up, to swirl and twist.

Flora jumped out from under the table, “Its more serious than I thought, we must be off, now, going, north girls! Make it so!” She clasped Fairywhether’s hands in her own and they began to lift from the ground. Their entourage of accoutrements fluttered and began to knock about, drawn towards the center where Fairywhether sizzled and sang like a delinquent bolt of lightning.

Too soon the sisters were indistinguishable from the storm clouds spinning crazily all around the porch. Strangely or perhaps not so, RJ, Oblivia and the Aquaricorn were not in the least affected by the gale. As soon as all of the items were safely within its twirling masses it seemed to wave and then without further ado, whizzed off into the afternoon.

“Well” Said the Aquaricorn with a wry smile, “That was weird.”

“Who needs an chia seed and cactus pie? I do.” said RJ.

“I wonder if the cow’s still there?” mused Oblivia.

At this they all laughed and proceeded inside.

INTERLUDE: IN WHICH WE MEET THE PEA GREEN CASTLE AND MAKE
THE ACQUAINTANCES OF ITS KEEPERS

Although I realize I am only nominally in charge of this story, being its teller and not its writer, it seems apropos to offer a bit of background regarding our location at this point- there being no time within the story to do this topic justice with a full tale. Events are progressing! Time escapes us! So with a fleeting glance, turn your attention to the foyer where we are now standing, and welcome!

To # 618 Possibility Rd., the extremely haunted, quite magical and beautifully ramshackled palace known to its familiars as the Pea Green Castle. Perhaps you’ve heard of it? No? Hmmm...perhaps if we share the identity of its stewards? Of the Incontinent Empress and Her Constructionist King? Or is it the Inconstant Emperor and His Constructivist Queen?

Still no bells a ringing? It’s no surprise. They aren’t well received in aristocratic circles. For one thing, they’re unapologetically in love. Smoochy. Spoony. Most inappropriate for leaders, sneer the prisoners of the court. Rumours abound. Lust

surely indicates that they are impostors of the worst kind. What's even more disturbing (for The Them that Judges you understand, not for Me) is that they have rather slippery characteristics, especially in the realms of gender and general rule following.

Mostly they look their parts: he's tall and she's short, but not always. And sometimes she's muscled and he's slight or is it vice versa? He has a fondness for accessories and she loves a bar room brawl. Except on Tuesdays when there's wind, then they switch. Don't fret, they hate labels anyway (which makes their pantry somewhat difficult to negotiate)- address them as "You, capital, why?" and all will go well. It's too hard to keep track of who's in charge. The house, for its part, doesn't believe in rulership anyway, so it all works out.

Truth be told, the entire place is a bit slippery. In and out of time it goes, content to be where it is but never precisely in one place. Inhabitants too, seem to slip in and out of being. (Oblivia once encountered an entire village of Brownies conducting a parliament in the dust bin, she'd wondered where all the extra thread spools had gone.) And sometimes, late at night, spirits who have been long out of body, throw a fan rattling party to which all are invited- you have to bring your own liquor though, because ambrosia never quite passes through the boundary of the material plane with much success.

Oh 618 is a whimsied place. It creaks and cupboards. It is secret light and cobwebs. And it's not hard to find. You remember Neverland? Second star to the right and straight on 'til morning? Well, the Pea Green Castle is just across the street, galactically speaking. Follow the river, click your heels, wiggle your nose- there are myriad ways to arrive. You'll know when you get there.

Because. In addition to it's imposing attention spanning structures and tree lined presence, there is a sign hanging over the door.

One quite unlike any this teller has ever seen. You can't mistake it. It's sort of a texty screening process. Humbly serving to draw those destined to revel inward and keep those opposed to jollity, out.

Here is
what it
a

THRICE WELCOME, FAMILIARS
AND STRANGERS AND
FRIENDLINGS
PLEASE WILL YOU TO LEAVE
YOUR SHAME AT THE DOOR.
WE'LL JUDGE NOT-
THIS PLACE IS ONE BIG
SANCTUARY.
NEED FEEDING?
THEN ENTER,
THERE'S PLENTY AND MORE!

SO, KNOCK IF YOU LIKE OR
DON'T IF YOU'D RATHER,
THE DOOR WILL BE OPEN IF
YOU'RE 'SPOSED TO COME IN.
JUST FOLLOW THE SCENTS
OF SUPPER AND GATHER
TOWARDS NO-WHERE WE'RE
TRAVELLING-
HERE REVELS BEGIN!

In
case you've says:
hankering to
to visit
hmmm?

So now you know. Shall we move on? Things other than Brownies are afoot! Don't lets us miss out!

How to treat a plot...
the second skimmings of a brain's storm.

STORY #3 IN WHICH WHAT IS UNDERLOCKE (AND KEY) HAUNTS OUR HEROINES
ENOUGH TO LISTEN. AND WANT VERY MUCH TO LEAVE.

Even though Flora and Fairywhether's visit set our heroines up to expect tumult, the next few weeks pass in a sea of inactivity. Everyone's punch drunk, but Responsible Jack shows her stir craziness a leetle bit more uh, creatively than the other two. When the Aquaricorn finds her trying to turn the shower into a galleon, she and Oblivia decide it's time to get out of the house.

They rev up the Proletariat Chariot and head for their favorite river road, sure that some stolen figs and whole fried fish from the Santa Maria des Pesces Chapel will spruce them up a bit. The river road's a twist of fate and none too safe, if you ask the faint of heart. But no fear, these ladies have been hop-skipping across levees and floodplains since they were knee high to a locust's eye. (And way too young to have negotiated most of the barbed wire they slipped in between. Ay me, youth.) In any case, they're on a first name basis with most of the delta's nooks and crannies.

Which is why they're a bit dumbfounded when they notice a sign for a town they've never heard of before hanging just there, over the road. Its suspended from a gnarled old cottonwood, a grandmother tree, a tree they're pretty sure they've never noticed before either. And there are lanterns too, red paper and candle lit. Which is great, because they're needed all of a sudden. The lanterns cast an eerie light over the fog that has suddenly pooled about the chariot.



These Oddities might have spurred a hasty departure for less stouthearted lasses but stout of heart and foolishly fancy these lasses most definitely are. So, up to their eyeballs in mist, they park the chariot and decide, against the Storyteller's better judgment I might add, to look around. The taqueria was miles away. The figs were leagues from ripeness. The chariot's rubber band was wheezing. It was time to stretch anyway. Once out of the chariot, visibility becomes myth and legend in an instant. They peer into the mist...

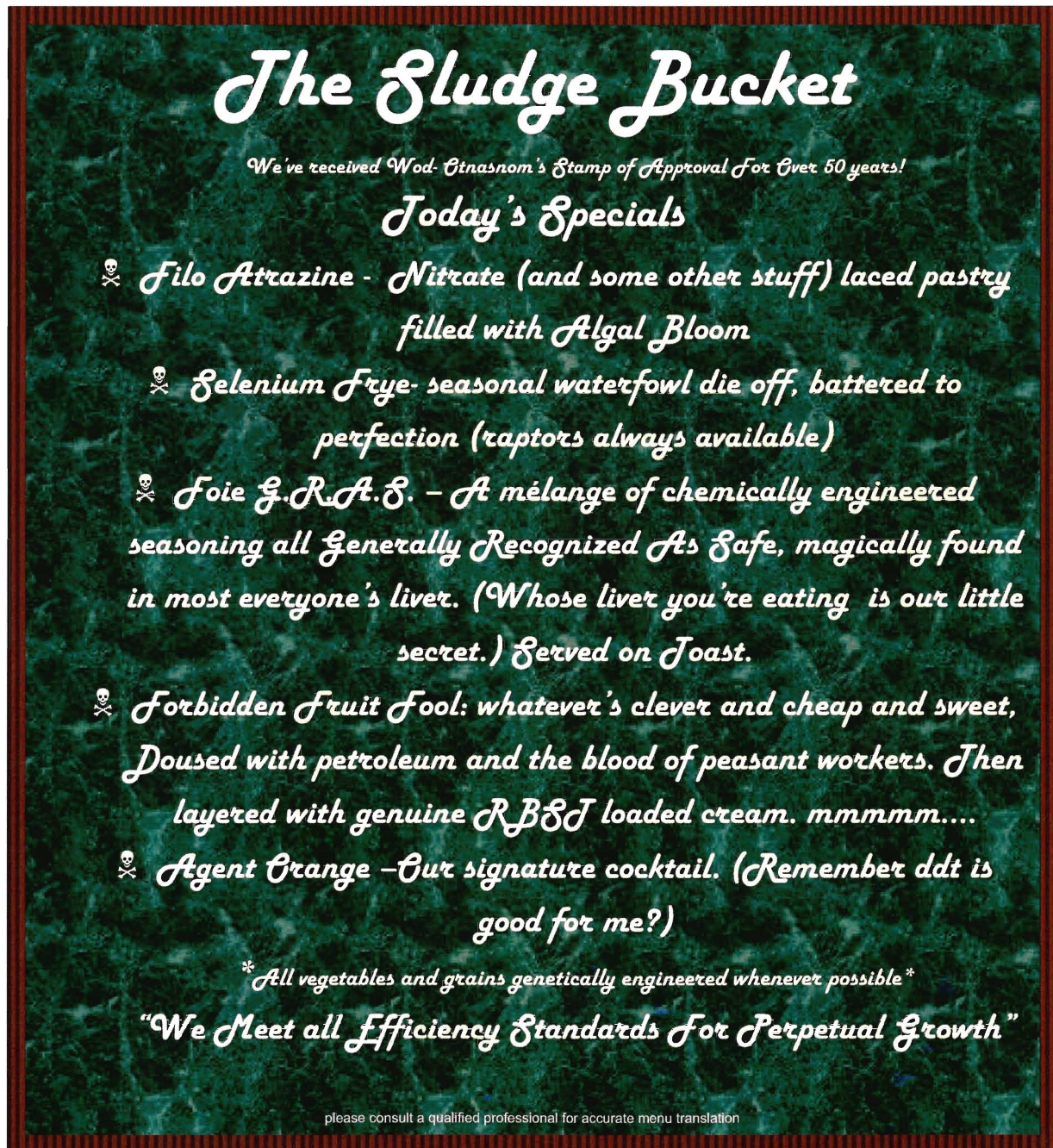
The road through Underlocke is not paved. In fact it's barely a road. It's more of a boardwalk, a bit plank like in places. The town, it seems, is smack dab in the middle of a marsh. The girls step gingerly on this uncertain ground, Underlocke is an eerie place to say the least. Slidy with a hint of slime at the corners. Not quite finished.

Something slinky is most definitely going on. For one thing, the clocks visible in the store windows are all sprinting in different directions- never a stable sign! The town drips with instability in fact. Take a look at the storefronts- quick, don't blink, they're changing! One minute there's an apothecary shop, all bright countered and Cantonese chatter, with the smell of musky licorice and dank herbs wafting onto the street. And then, whoosh! It's a forgotten squatter's den replete with roaches, dust and broken windows.

The townspeople are odd too. Dressed funny and not all there. As in, a touch-vaporous- you could say ghostly. Underlocke is a town betwixt and between, a living palimpsest of past and not so. Neither are exceptionally pleasant. rJ and the Aquaricorn are all for heading back into the marsh and out of town, but Olivia's stomach is growling in earnest and her naiveté is singing a descant. She swears all will be well if they enter a café at the moment when it's living in the reality they want to be a part of, 'trust me', she says.

Strolling down the cavalcade they spy a quaint corner café. Inside there's a quaint line of barstools in front of a gleaming

Formica counter top above which hangs a quaint chalkboard. The lettering is neatly retro and describes the most frightening menu and unsavoury offerings you can imagine.



Behind the counter is a waitress- at least that's what she's made to look like. Perky and perfectly shaped from her stilettos to her coiffed head, "Betty#2", is a dream of a worker. Literally. She's sculpted from silicon, she warms to your body temp and is almost impossible to melt. (Unlike "Betty#1 who was plastic and is now lying in a charcoaled heap near the dish machine, shhh!)

Betty's friendly as can be, though the girls are feeling a mite edgy after their perusal of the specials menu. She totters out on stilettoed heels and says, "Hello, I'm Betty too, I'll be your prosthetic memory maker today, that's waitress to you less versed in UnderLocke Lingo" She winks, "Can I read you the menu today?", puzzled the girls ask why- they can see the menu plain as day on the board above them. Betty replies, "Oh you sillies! Only a *trained professional* can read that menu. Just me and chef at present. Now where was I...hmmm- we have a lovely spanikopita- that's Greek you know, and fried chicken and..." But she never gets to finish because the "chef"- who actually appears to be more of a mad scientist type suddenly explodes out of the kitchen, screaming and runs out of the building. There's a roaring chemical fire that follows which catches Betty#2's outfit alight. As our heroines back out of the door, horrified -Betty#2 is shrouded in a halo of blue fire. Though the flames are cresting the 500 degree mark, Betty#2 remains a dutiful worker- she's still rambling off the specials and welcoming them to the Bread Basket Café, assuring them that all food safety standards have been sternly adhered to and that she hopes their meal will be a fine one.

This story is meant to introduce the finer points of California's Agricultural Success; there are nods to Monsanto and Dow as well as Silicon Valley and Hollywood's roles in producing 'good' media that spews the agri-business gospel.

Once they're out on the streets again they breathe a collective sigh of relief and tune their ears riverward- there's a tinkling cackle of a carnival carousing through the tule. The girls are anxious to get away from the shift facades and even shiftier folks of UnderLocke and head towards the water.

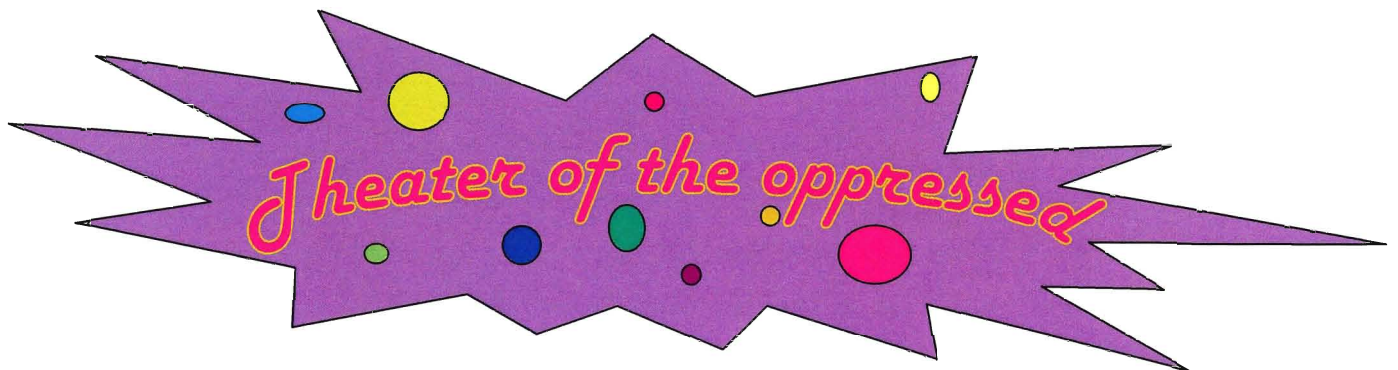
Unfortunately, the carnival is well attended by the town's residents- all in various states of skeletal decomposee and wraithy films. The most popular attraction by far seems to be the



No one from our party wants to go into this place but the ectoplasmic tide is like a magnet- they simply have to enter, even if it's a horror show. And it is...

Here is where the riverland's dead-and-yet-not come for a little cathartic re-imagining: There are the phantoms of suspiciously handcuffed Free Indians, blue tinged farmers drowned in silt and gold rushed sludge, coolies of every color – broken, dead even and still carrying yokes, Chinese masons maimed by railroad work, and of course the myriad soiled doves, can-canning their way through tuberculosis and death with equal abandon and despair. And, as if throngs of the not so recently deceased were not eerie enough, there's what's happening inside.

Entering the NotSoFunHouse is a down the rabbit hole experience to say the least. First of all, the walls are *alive*, and boy are they chatty! In throaty whispers and sighs, all that has passed in UnderLocke's marsh is recounted in wall-speak as the dead pass through its halls. And every so often an image flickers across the expanse of peeling paint, a fleeting glimpse of what has been. Everyone is heading towards a set of heavy double doors over which hangs a gaily painted sign reading:



It's kind of like a live action wax museum, but creepier, albeit extremely fascinating. Everyone gathers in the theater which is amphitheater shaped, with a small circular stage in the middle. There is a ringleader, whose profile is illuminated with tick tock precision by a heavy chandelier, lit with wraith-glow of steaming green. It swings back and forth across the stage. In some lights he is every inch a mission murdered man, tell tale bible indentation in the head region, and then there's his shackles and heavy wooden cross. But sometimes, if the angle is right- you'd swear by a set of shaggy ears, a dog like jowl and yip-and was that the flick of a coyote's tail? Well you'd swear by it that is, if you could call the tattered heap of rags and bones capering about the stage anything at all. They wonder exactly who's running this show...It seems the role of actor is open to Anyone. Anyone dead that is. The first act is collective, a puppet show of sorts. The ringleader yells out, "His Story states that we did this thusly, that is we died thatly, and lived thisly, Hear ye! Hear ye! Let's do the past dance folks!" He opens a dusty tome out of which spiral myriad strings which fly upwards through the air and attach themselves to all the wraithish wrists and palms. Everyone's arms jerk upwards and sideways, attached to history's marionette strings. He reads the book, which outlines the 'acceptable' history of the river bottoms highlighting the slow inorexable march of progress and how wonderful its eventual outcomes are. The members of the theater become drained of color and animation, and out of the gaping holes where their mouths should have been, fly streams of text. The audience gone actors stumble and swing about the stage, performing the good books rendition of their lives and deaths. It looks...well, fake- contrived- not the real story.

In a few minutes the ringleader calls out, "HALT!" And everyone stops mid-swing. "There are other things to say- now hear we all what is UnderLocke and key- O members of the silent chorus, I hear your bones singing! Lets re-imagineate, lets de-pontificate, let's tell the under tales!" And the audience snaps the cords that tie them to history's book and shimmy. Our heroines are intrigued, or perhaps their knees have given way- in any case- they settle in to their seats for the second act.

This version of what was is not so tame. There are no strings attached anymore. Everyone has a chance to perform and the entire audience is invited to play supporting roles and suggest alternate outcomes. These are not the stories you've read about the river lands. This is a savagely macabre vaudeville wherein

each death and tale of woe is reenacted in all its unjust gory detail. No holds are barred and no voices are squelched. It's a fugue, a multivoiced dirge of anguish. But that's not all- there is triumph here too. These are stories of murder and imprisonment yes, but still, there are bridges of joy and laughter- moments reenacted where the dead lived their own lives, outside of what history wrote for them. Sometimes, it seems that they even change their own fates. The text falls away, and as they re-work their deaths, color begins to return to their shrunken faces, as they pantomime the grisly truths of their demise, the wounds begin to heal. Never the less, it is a violent and frightening process. There seems to be no end to the number of people 'done in'.

During a particularly gruesome interpretation of a 19th century mass slaughter of "savage" Indian children and mothers, Oblivia screams. And then the game is up- the audience actors notice that the living are among them and all the music of their story telling ceases, they stop dancing. They begin to wail. It is a wail that echoes off the theater walls and becomes a wispy keen, a strand of sorrow that wraps itself around our heroines' throats. It is deafening. Without thinking too much, Oblivia, rJ and the Aquaricorn jump up and head for the egress. They run, in fact. Out the heavy double doors and past the whispering walls, who are now afire with the imagery of injustice. Run and run and run. They shriek too, anything to drown out the keening of Underlocke's residents. So intent on their flight are they, they almost crash head long in to a brightly colored caravan, the first of a train, drawn by the strangest beast they've ever seen.

The location of Underlocke (and key) is based on a real ghost town on the Sacramento river delta called Locke, which was settled by Chinese sharecroppers after the Swamp Acts of the late 19th century brought them to build levees . These acts allowed for the marsh lands to be drained and farmed, but the exclusionary and racist citizenship politics of the time precluded non-white farmers from owning land at all until 1952. The town still exists, albeit in a ramshackle and rather deserted state. The ringleader is the character of Coyote, a pervasive figure in Native Californian belief- he is both a victim of colonial rule and an instigator of rebellion, resurrection even- meant to question how white historical accounts construct agency. He is the trickster. The theater where the ghosts go is still in the center of town, the acts that the ghosts participate in are meant to evoke Augusto Boal's Theater of the Oppressed, where in oppressed peoples use improvisational community theater to re-imagine and creatively transform political realities.

STORY #4: THE UNITARD AND THE YOU NEED MORE MEDICINE SHOW

If it weren't for its grin (pretty, to say the least) they'd have called it Brutish, it's that Herculean. If it weren't for its variously sparkling and vacant gaze (the eyes are horse-like, unable to be hidden even by that Neanderthalic brow, liquid brown with long curling lashes- Indecent eyelashes-)they'd have called it dark. If it weren't for its methodically slow steady heave (for it's pulling the caravan! there's a leather strap, is it a harness? stretched across the forehead amongst the black curls) they'd have sworn it wanted to bolt. Human? Perhaps, but lither of limb and longer of digit than any they've encountered so far. And then there's the outfit- its all of a piece, sleeveless and made from something clingy, a dancer's garb, a wrestler's or a yogis perhaps. The gender? Slippery to start with but increasing male-ish upon observation. The mobile mouth stretches itself as if to speak but it never gets the chance. Its head is suddenly jerked back by means of the bridle like strap strung like a bridal veil across its head and the drivers interrupt, both the seamless gait and the words still unspoken and girls guess that this is a fairly common occurrence because the beautiful beast? sighs resignedly and allows for the verbal explosion which follows to erupt.

“What's that beast? Quell hold up?”

“Hardly efficient you know, stopping, what!”

The riders are well dressed and from the tips of their slick do's to the slide of their quick tongues, extremely well oiled. They're aged middling, slightly bald and remarkably twinnish in appearance. The effect is almost Tweedle dee and Tweedle dum but craftier, salesmen- yes! but not of used cars, something far greater is up for grabs and what's more- these two are clearly *performers*... The two too charming gentlemen introduce themselves as Various and Sundry, Esquires the both of them, purveyors, owners, creators and directors of the

YOU NEED MORE MEDICINE SHOW !!!!

Featuring

THE
(Completely Voluntarily Manacled)
HU-MANATAUR

And...

THE JUNIOR
PHANTASTICA
TROUPE
OF

Varied Vaudevillian Delights

And they offer our three heroines a lift out of the hellish mists of Underlocke. Wary, but seeing little other choice, they accept. With a flick of their eyebrows they tacitly agree to keep on their toes, eyes peeled and nostrils on the lookout for funny stuff. After having been assured of the beast's ability to carry the extra three bodies, they climb aboard, albeit feeling a mite anxious and more than a little guilty that the caravan is being pulled by what they are increasingly sure is a human being.

They say as much to their hosts whose laughter is perhaps a bit too loud to be classified as anything other than maniacal. Various and Sundry explain amidst their giggles that the Unitard, for so the beast is called is simple, Dangerously so. Burden bearing and the odd job are all he can handle - He needs a yoke to be comfortable, really it true. He's good with the troupe, provided they don't fraternize, too risky. In all truthfulness, they confide, he's of the type that probably shouldn't be allowed to breed. Well, just look at his outfit! Quell femme! To which our heroines give resounding- round of : Medieval Narrowness and Yuck! (from Oblivia). Freaky Kinks indeed! (from rJ) and a contemptuous Beasts! from the Aquaricorn.

It is around about this time, when the caravan, which the girls realize is actually made of three separate trailers begins to clear the river mist. They emerge in to the now waning afternoon light and hear a bit of squeak coming from the closed curtains of the second trailer. Soon a mélange of trebled voices begins to waft their way "I have to pee! When do we stop! I'm hungry! She hit me! It's hot! I'm bored! Who's that?" and scores of other vastly important complaints is tripping over the river side oaks and willows. The Junior Phantastica Troupe has made their presence known.

This is the point at which the plot treatment becomes somewhat *more* general. So, we shall resort to a more skeletal structure, bullet points perhaps, as the story is not so fleshed out , yet...

- The troupe is comprised of six kids, all of varying ages and talents, their character sketches and the 'lesson' taught by their presence in the story follow.
 - Ye Olde Banana: Forced into vaudeville as a child . She was good at the song and dance, but tired of the bullshit. Even her stage name hates on farce- you can't get an older or a more tired joke than the banana peel. She's cut her puppet strings however and wandered off the boards, only to be scooped up by V n S. She's fifteen, acerbic and

seriously smart, she's learning the finer points of tenderness and not to wear so much greasepaint- it might clog her pores. (honesty, and lack of control-politics)

- Lilou la Perruque: The jury's still out about whether Lilou is a corporate spy or just the sweet lovin' daughter of an Erudite Giant and a Frenchy Wood nymph. One thing for certain, she's got a lot of questions, more than a few maladies and she's never done the laundry before. Good thing the girls are here to help. Learning about the pastiche of partagering (the patchwork assemblage of sharing practice)
- The Littlest Cowboy and the Miner Forty Niner (and the ethical zoo) : These guys are unceremoniously dumped at the porch of the caravan (or so Various and Sundry Say) by their primly eco-friendly nannies who can't handle their whooping and hollering, their entourage of noisy pretend animal friends or their taste in fringe and leather- particularly their performance of white man's truth- how will our heroines help to change history in the minds of these munchkins, whose good hearts and lithe spirits have been indoctrinated with machismo, violence and the lies of history at school and coddled by the "hipper than thou" ecological elite after it?...performative pedagogy, gardening, chores and ecological ethic).
- Sassy and Saucy (The Softshoe Siblings): These girl's characters are still a bit hazy, they can dance, they can sing, they giggle tremendously and they've tried their hands at a bit of girly manipulation more than once. Perhaps they'll tell about the beauty of adornment and the dangers of normalizing the Barbie-type as The Feminine Ideal???
- Background on the Unitard: Various and Sundry have told him that he's the son of the HuManataur and some Jezebel of No Account who ran off in a most un-wifely way to pursue her freedom. His father was never the same and decided to be chained up to protect the world. They pay him for his labour, in poker chips- which he arranges on the floor of his corner of the caravan in a beautiful mosaic. He's a quiet revolutionary, in the old-school sense. He wants to be free of VnS but stubbornly insists that there's only one

way it can happen. The Unitard is expecting something in between a parade and an invasion by a group he says will call themselves the Vanguard, who will all look like him. Only through them will he be liberated from his toil and enslavement to the big lie. The Vanguard will have slogans, (which he assumes will be terrible weapons) and outfits that match. They will march in step. They will sing in one voice and speak with one message, and it's that unified message, and that message only, that will trigger the Unitard's freedom. Until then he's bound to do as the bosses say- even if it means betraying his very heart and soul to the whims of monsters.

- Dinner with Various and Sundry: As it's getting late the munchkin din is growing , and the proletariat chariot has disappeared from the top of the hill the caravans stop and the girls decide to stick around when VnS ask them to dine. They order the Unitard to catch them some dinner and sit down to lounge and smoke and drink whiskey and cough syrup- just to tide them over. They say that the girls after dinner treat will be a show from the troupe and a glimpse at the HuManataur.
- The Unitard returns with a few smallmouth bass but VnS scoff at them- introduced game fish indeed. They deserve rarity! They want a big fish-the biggest! The best! Uni knows which one, the giant sturgeon lady, the one with caviar! The species is threatened, say the girls, they shouldn't- Threatened schmetened says Various. Absence makes the heart grow fonder says Sundry. The whip cracks and off the Unitard goes. Disgusted and angry the Aquaricorn wanders off into the woods. rJ and Oblivia set to cooking up the bass for the troupe, with rJ's emergency cast iron skillet and Oblivia's secret pocket stash of herbs and salt, of course. Quara returns, just as the Unitard heaves an eight hundred pounder at the feet of VnS, with a skirt full of stolen fruit and the company hastens to a glade far from the wretches to feast. Various and Sundry are slurping up sturgeon roe by the pound and order the rest of the fish to be dumped in the river at pain of death. Uni obeys, of course. VnS don't notice the bass feast at all- they seem not to have a thought for the children- it's a good thing the girls were there.
- After dinner the children, who seem not to have tasted fish or fruit before begin to look sketchy- perhaps they don't want to perform? Various and Sundry appear and the kids begin to clamour for sweets, VnS pretend to

protest, but really, they're all too happy to ladle lollys and sweet tarts and chocolates and twizzle sticks down the little gullets. And soda pop, and twinkies and gummies and special teeth rot taffies and... you get the picture. Our heroines have no dental care, so they decline.

- The Show: to be created...sugar spun and twitchy for sure. The kids all collapse- from exhaustion or the sugar crash at the end of it
- Diagnosed by Various and Sundry as hyperactive, lacking focus and overstressed, the Unitard duly administers 'medicine' to them- they fall into a trance. At which point the HuManataur is wheeled out.
- The HuManataur (if you've not guessed, that's a play on Human Nature) is a mechanical three headed monster with claws like CAT parts and veins pulsing with oil. Where it s faces should be are screens and where there are usually ears, there are blaring speakers. Its belly has a gaping mouth that looks ravenous. And though they can't see it, there's great big turnable key sticking out of the back. The children are transfixed, they watch everything the monster does and repeat what blares . The act is comprised of a strange song. Something like the Mock Turtle's Lobster Quadrille? A Lull-A-Buy about Selfishness, Need and Destruction, the names of the HuManataur's three heads. The kids are almost comatose after it's done. Oblivia volunteers to put them to bed, rJ takes the clue and goes off to keep Various and Sundry occupied and Aquaricorn wanders off into the woods looking for a portal back to Arcady no doubt.
- When Oblivia puts the children to bed she notices several extra pallets lying empty at the back of the caravan. She asks the kids about it- they get shifty eyed, muddled. She presses them a bit more but they can't seem to remember much of anything before the HuManataur's last show. Oblivia gives them each a swig of her special head clearing decoction (you never know when a bitter brew will come in handy) and they perk up a bit.
- The Olde Banana speaks first: They were abducted she thinks, although she's always been in one show or another. And then the littlest cowboy pipes up: It ate them! It ate them! All the others! It isn't a monster it's a machine! They wind it up an' it eats children and turns them into grownups!
- Banana continues: I think the next stop is usually the Mall of Distractions, but we never get to get out. But Various and Sundry have told her that she'll

soon get to walk the mall, which can only mean one thing- she's next inline to be consumed. Meanwhile...

- rJ goes head to head with Various and sundry's wiles, drowning their various concoctions with a swarthy scamps tippled grace. She challenges them to a game of three handed pinochle, winner takes the second caravan, loser promises a lifetime of servitude. To seal the deal they all take a swig from rJ's flask. VnS figure they're victory's a sure thing. rJ's bound to be trashed- they've dosed her with enough pharma-goo to sedate three elephants, plus three handed makes them almost partners- how could she possibly triumph?? They don't account for rJ's legendary tolerance, the strength of her homemade hooch or her skill at pinochle. She wins and whistles- and before VnS can stumble to their feet the proletariat chariot has sidled up to the second caravan and Oblivia's hooked her up. Meanwhile...
- The Aquaricorn's meandering through the trees humming dreamily but with a little twinge of sad- there's no portal in sight. And then...she sees him. Dancing.
- The sub-plot of the Unitard and the Aquaricorn: The Aquaricorn and the Unitard are birds of a feather so to speak, kindreds. Both are shackled by "monstrous" things. The Aquaricorn because she clings to a utopia, nowhere fantasy land and compromises her integrity to procure pretty things. The Unitard is held by his inflexibility and universalism. Their enslavement can't be called choice per se, because they're too downtrodden to see the source of the chains, as of yet.
- The Unitard is a somnambulist of the acrobatically breathtaking variety. In dreamtime he stretches, lithe and graceful, sashes and lalts with gorgeous flair. Te Aquaricorn tingles with a most human like fluttering, she feels her knees a tapping. She goes to him. Asleep still, he takes her in his arms and they waltz. Painting rhythms and beautiful illusions with their feet. He lifts her and turns her quickly. Somehow in the strange flip twist her horns slash the reins at his temples. He wakes up, startled, the bridled cap still on his head, and screams.
- Their eyes meet. She says, 'you are the most beautiful steps I have ever taken' But the Unitard is frightened beyond belief and verbal all of a sudden, "Is it time? Where is the Vanguard?" His voice frightens him further. The

Aquaricorn definitely does not look like him. There is no parade. No answers, no slogans. Only a fleeting memory of belonging which is fading as the haze of his long enslavement leaves him. Recognizing that he has been duped is just too much, he bursts into tears and is soon overtaken by a wild rage. Tearing at the branches of the trees, at the ground, at himself he is inconsolable. With hardly a fleeting glance at out poor befuddled Aquaricorn he stumbles weeping into the forest, leaving her alone.

- Oblivia, rJ and the second caravan careen into the clearing at that moment, led by the chariot, the Junior Phantastic troupe in tow. Yelling that Various and Sundry will only be incapacitated for a day or so, and that they'd better get a move on, the Aquaricorn jumps aboard and the rattling party heads for the river road and the long trek to the castle.
- The way back is somewhat slower since the chariot's pulling so much more weight and by lunchtime the next day, they're still travelling. Luckily, the taqueria of Our Lady des Pesces is right up ahead...
- *Various and Sundry are of course, the soulless corporate 'embodiments' of capitalism dispensing pharmaceutical oblivion and turning children into apes for candy and entertainment then feeding them to a monster they created and call human nature. This is all in order to turn them into mindless automaton-like adults who will make them rich. VnS lack response-ability and ethic on all accounts. They also enslave the Unitard who is emblematic of the working class 'man', mired in gender roles and held to his enslavement by inflexibility and universalism.*
- Story # 6 la Tabula Raza and the Our Lady des Pesces Taqueria: *The short scene at the taqueria talks about Mexican culture in California and the continued dependence on exploited migrant labour routinely called "virtual enslavement" when it is discussed in the History books. La Tabula Raza (LaT for short) is a character based on the mix and matching of two concepts- first the idea of Tabula Rasa, or clean slate, referring to the ol' Nature v. Nurture debate. The clean slate argument suggests that we are socially and culturally constructed. The second is an allusion to La Raza or "the race" which was a common expression to denote Chicano pride/activism. La Tabula Raza then will call attention to institutionalized*

racism, the construction of race and the simultaneous existence and reciprocal natures of resistance and oppression.

- I think LaT will be conducting some union-y rabble rousing via her (most excellent) Tacos al Pastor . This story's still being formed yet...but there's another customer at the taqueria who, like our heroines is listening with interest to LaT's spiel and is very interested in the caravan as well. In fact she follows the party outside of the taqueria and begs a ride. Having decided that one more body won't make much of a difference to either the chariot's progress or the castle's stores they agree. Penelope jumps aboard and begins almost at once to talk- and boy oh boy! Can she!
- Story #7: Penelope and the Public Pickle Project: Penelope Prudentia is only nine, but she was kicked out of the Prudent Picklers Processing Plant for political reasons, nevertheless. Her aunt Polyphore runs the place under an iron fist and three maxims: Predatory Profit, Private Piety and the Punitive Purging of Pests. Penelope positively purrs with a love of alliteration, which is hereditary, but can't stomach the rest of her family's parsimonious prattle. Her penurious position, however, has forced her onto the street.
- Combining their talents and winning over the Inconstant Emperor/ess they all work together to form the Public Pickle Project which ultimately finances their journey North. (becoming ungovernable subjects, radical democratization, extra-market activities)
- The public pickle project was hashed out by Penelope when she was in the throes of righteous rage- when injustice looms she trances out a bit, in an astoundingly combative fashion sometimes. fighting the good fight can be really, really loud. It's something she's working on. Anyhoo, if there's anything Penny's aunt Polyphore hates, it's a public pickle. Public projects are pernicious, polluted, perilous. People cannot be trusted to know what's good for them. They will abuse freedom if left uncontrolled. All good things- and Polyphore's pickles are paradisiacal- must be privately pursued. There are leaders, Penelope and there are plebeians- your blood runs patrician and that's that. To which Penny says, "Phbbbt!!!!"
- Penny proposes a parallel plan to Polypore predatory politics. She thinks that the ancient knowledge of the Prudentia clan should proliferate. That is to say

that profit shouldn't be player in matters of philosophy or things preserved. In fact, (and La T. Raza agrees) that pickles and preserves are revolutionary. Just think if people could pick produce themselves- decide on their own spices! prepare for the cold seasons themselves! Praise their own pousses, pack together! The practical knowhow they would amass! The merriment that would abound! The possibilities that would present! It could spark a landslide of critical thought and fun. The Pea Green Castle couldn't agree more. And what better way to help rid the Junior Phantastica kids of the three headed monster and Various and Sundry's sugary venom than putting up with some good old fashioned summertime steam in the picklin' kitchen? Penny it seems would be pleased and proud to pay back her Aunt's proselytizing by spilling all of the Prudentia's secrets into our heroines waiting ears. She's a lot to handle my Penelope is, perky and proud a pistol when she's perturbed. But the ladies can't help but love her. They all agree that since their journey north has been foreordained the Public Pickle Project must sally forth. And so it begins.

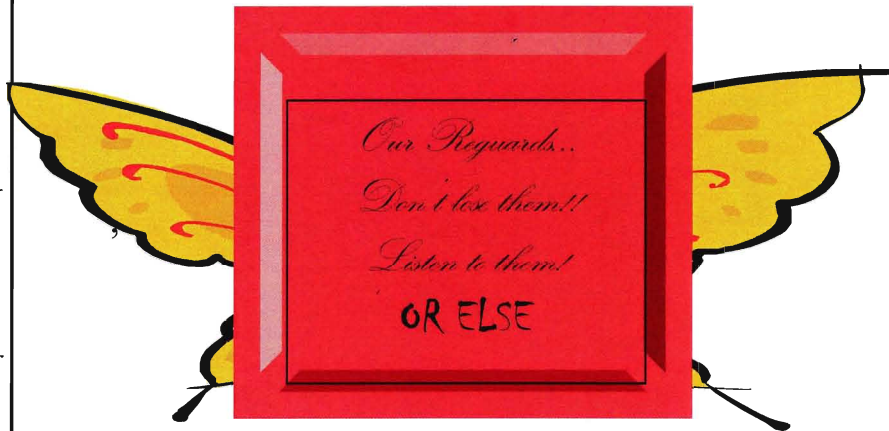
- *The Public Pickle Project grapples most specifically with sovereignty itself. Taking Foucault's notion of governable subjects, this story suggests a way to elude the Panopticon, suggesting that that the powerful sometime over privilege their own opinion and perspectives as well as assume the inevitability of capitalism. Public pickling throws a wrench into the gas works of labour and consumption by bringing sovereignty into the mix and using food production as a jumping off point to become radically un-governable, i.e. not subject i.e. anarchists. It also brings intergenerational engagement to light and calls attention to how knowledge can be passed between people.*
- They work together, and fill the castle's long unused dungeons with jeweled jams and perkily dilled pickles, cucumbers, beets and carrots- they would have pickled the mailman had he not waved a particularly handsome scroll in their faces at just the right moment.

My Dears,

I have never stood upon such ceremonies as introductions. Suffice it to say that You are hereby Summoned... The court is getting colder and I can't last. all temperance hangs in the balance- the chill will tilt things too much.. whether and flora say to send their regards. they are enclosed. come quickly! mind the begles. As ever, and as if for the first time, oh yes- remember to Turn left!!!

t. T.j'

- Enclosed was another envelope- little and red and... breathing? They noticed tiny wings heaving at the envelope's sides. Stretching and fluffing themselves, like they were waking up.



- Story #8: In which our Heroines visit the Court of Old King Cold and meet the Cameo Jester: They journey north and finally arrive at the gates of the Coldest Court Around- Its hard to get to the castle though, as its surrounded by a dense temperate rainforest, filled with invasive (and

mighty grumpy) plants. but they do(with a little help of Aunt Eff and Auntie Whether) The Northern King of nothing at all turns out to be a detached philanthropist with a fear of public affection, and a lady, with a long time case of the blues herself. The King's palace is lovely, its green and leafy, but whoa! Is it chilly there. See the sadder she gets, the colder and more isolated the King's palace becomes. The worst part is that she loves herself some entertainment, but her resident source of laughter and dearest friend, the cameo jester won't be coaxed out of hiding. The jester likes a more toasty clime, not being made for stormy weather. But it's a catch 22- the longer the

Jester hides, the colder The King becomes. What will they do? (Build a solar heating system with the aid of their hearts?) The King's house heats up, and with a few lessons from some ancient stewards (imprisoned in the castle, they're invisible when viewed through monarchy's monocle) the jungle transforms into a healthy ecosystem again. The Jester imparts some wisdom and the King finally meets a Consort- from Queens of all places- Say yello to the Jewel of a Healer_____.

- Story #8: The Rook's library and Edith, the Salt of the Earth. (on war, ecosystem control, text compassion, common sense, abetting patriarchy and chess- among other things)
- Story #9: The glorious return of Salamander Jill (rJ's first mate) and her true love Pince Charmant- fairy tail love, forgiveness and depression.
- Story #10: the Aquaricorn and the Unitard meet in the forests and find something better than unification, resulting in the dissolution of their enslavements.
- Story #10: In which the heroines throw a party out of the window and say goodbye...for now.

Fire...

“Whatever it is that pulls the pin, that hurls you past the boundaries of your own life into a brief and total beauty - even for a moment - it is enough.” (Winterson, 1997, p. 219)

GUIDE TO THE ELEMENT

The catalyst- what ignites. Fire is the element of spirit. It is guided by intuition, inspiration and sacrifice. Its material manifestations are of ephemeral origin (whether electric or anthropomorphic) but the relationship of its form to the environment, has material consequence. It moves quickly, it alights wherever there are sparks and fuel to feed it.

Fire carries great responsibility. It shapes great swaths of landscapes, its path affects all living things. It is a famed carrier of power. Fire’s conscious use and manipulation is, in many tellings, what distinguishes humans, proof of their superiority over the rest of creation. Which proof you prove depends on your cosmology, I suppose, and how you live your life.

In this telling, printed text is Fire’s medium. Both fire and files can be quick moving- these aspects of the thesis are easily sent to others- via internet cables, reprinting etc.. There is, as always, a cost, a use of energy. Like fire, technology burns fuel. In the 21st century however, this cost is not easily seen. Electricity flows in heaving torrents of cable and signal- enclosed within wire, underwater and neatly plastered into the walls of our homes. But a spark, is a spark-right?

THE ENCOUNTER

In this project I invoke the element of fire to relay history because my discovery of the extent to which “history” invisibilizes capitalist violence and racism were the primary catalysts for my own ethico-ecological transformations. The encounter with fire builds gradually; the metaphoric relationships between issues proliferate throughout but become more intense as the encounter progresses. They respond not only to the fuel I give them, but also to my internal climate, which becomes more conducive to their communication as the encounter develops. This parallels my thesis journey in many ways. Fire’s encounter begins with the spark I felt in Hawaii, which catapulted me into this project and proceeds to sift through historical flames of embodied violence in Europe and the hot issues of weather, race and language.

Fire’s text uses the tools of prose and academic language most often- communications forged in the lap of conquest, built to signify a particular vision as “the world.” But fire uses them as “la perruque.” DeCerteau describes this as “the worker’s own work disguised as work for the employer...the worker who indulges in la perruque actually diverts time from the factory for work that is free, creative and precisely not directed towards profit” (De Certeau, 1984, p. 25). It is not casual theft, but a calculated effort to incite re-volution from within the belly of the academic beast, to disturb its regimes and to transform them.

It does this by becoming conscious of utilizing popular voice and visibilizing subjugated knowledges. Fire endeavors to bring these into its light while setting constructed essentialisms ablaze. Fire uses the artifice of the word both consciously and tactically imbuing it with autoethnographic narrative that sometimes verges on slang. This self-conscious timber plays with the concept of academic positioning in order to respond to the historical oppression of the

scriptural economy, aiming to demonstrate how, as De Certeau says, “The actual order of things is precisely what “popular tactics” turn to their own ends...Though elsewhere it is exploited by a dominant power or simply denied by an ideological discourse, here order is *tricked* by an art.” (De Certeau, 1984, p. 26)

In addition to critically employing prose, it uses a variety of other textual techniques to emphasize Fire’s agile nature and its mobility. This allows the encounter to be less rooted in form than the others. There are prosaic reflections, poetic observations and staunchly academic prose. I also use font style to distinguish different tactical voices, and emphasize the interplay of forces that aid this element’s spread.

Interspersed within my narratives are quotes from Jeannette Winterson’s book GUT Symmetries. Ostensibly this book is about a physicist’s love triangle, but its also about “the miracles of the universe, revealed through science, and human miracles made possible through love” as well as “the dimensionality of time.” The title is a play on words.

“GUT stands for Grand Unified Theory - the theory of everything science wants to discover - and it's gut as in gut instinct, the feelings that lead us on much more than we like to admit. Symmetries, well, it's the search for a perfect parallel universe, the one just like ours but without the problems.” (Winterson, Books: Gut Symmetries, 2008)

This book stretches metaphoric relationships as my work aims to do. My use of these quotes is to re-member Fire as a spiritual healer. To energize what inspires me to use my intuition and passion but also to question and examine how my desires orient and fuel themselves.

SPARK

“This has been my difficulty. The difficulty with my life. Those well built trig points, those physical determinants of parents, background, school, family, birth, marriage, death, love, work, are themselves as much in motion as I am. What should be stable, shifts. What I am told is solid, slips. The sensible ordinary world of fixity is a folklore. The earth is not flat. Geometry cedes to algebra. The Greeks were wrong.” (Winterson, 1997, p. 9)

I lived on the East Side of the Island of Hawai'i for a little over three years. My years there transformed, translated, transmogrified me at times. I still laugh at my ridiculous inability to convey how I feel about those times. I attended a food sovereignty conference in Hilo Town, on Moku O Keawe, commonly referred to as the Big Island of Hawaii, during the summer of 2007. Although I felt that I had researched both the food sovereignty “movement” and scrutinized my own racial positioning within Hawaii's culture enough to be present as a respectful ally to indigenous interests, I was not prepared for the extent to which I would be emotionally and physically transformed by my experiences at the Ho'ea Ea conference.

The conference activities were a mélange of storytelling, listening, eating, music and chanting as well as active participation in agricultural practice. One of the conference leaders, Dr Manu Meyer, spoke about Hawaiian epistemology in education- she says that we don't know something if we just think it, we have to then enter into a dialogue with others, relate it and then do it- repeatedly. It is the process of think, relate and do that constitutes knowing within a Native Hawaiian context (Meyer, 1998)

Journal Entry: July_ 2007, days before I leave for the Mainland...

I am a state of flux. Part of this that my toddler like inclination to taste everything I come in contact with has been blown into a dizzying state of complexity as I delve further into the crevices of taste itself. Part of it is that I am leaving this island. This fact, I find, generates a sharp and specific ache. Not quite homesickness but enough to make me catch my breath. I am sifting through my lessons learned and heading into a new phase. But that is not it. Mostly I have become this maze of too many words and not enough sense is due to the upheaval I experienced as a result of attending Ho'ea Ea, a food sovereignty conference in Hilo town.

I had heard the words “Ho'Ea” before. In the taro patch of a children's garden where I volunteered. As each “huli”, the corm top which will become a new taro plant, was placed in the ground the group chanted: “Ku kumu hō ea.” When I asked what it meant I was told that it translates to “planting our freedom”. Later I looked up each of the words in the online Hawaiian dictionary, and conjured a similar meaning which says: “Rise Up! And begin to establish sovereignty!” There is also an implication of a transfer of energy in the word “hō” so that the phrase is both an invocation and an action- I loved that.

On the last day, of the conference however, I found myself in tears, speaking with Manu telling her I didn't know what to do with “all of this.” By which I meant:

“I see that I live in a body with little ancestral knowledge. One attached to a history written by the ‘victors’ in the bloodied lap of conquest. A view devoted to devaluing subsistence, and to chronicling theft and violence as progress. I see my implication in relationships of racial inequality. I recognize my cultural predilection to exert my individuality upon others is not universal amongst peoples. I hunger for alternative economic and relational futures. I sometimes despair over the violence of the world I live in. I am cognizant of how the elected ignorance of white middle class America (from which I come) disenfranchises indigenous food networks. I have profound respect for the cultures and landscape in Hawai’i. I have learned so much. I want to stay and I cannot ethically do so. I am anguished over leaving.”

She said, “Remember, you walk in the footsteps of your kūpuna⁶, listen to them and they will tell you where to go.”

Those words have stayed with me since then, haunted me really. What does it mean to walk in the footsteps of those who came before me? How is my life connected to theirs and what privileges or disadvantages do I enjoy because I walk in their footsteps?

⁶ Plural of kupuna. 1. Grandparent, ancestor, relative or close friend of the grandparent's generation, grandaunt, granduncle. 2. Starting point, source; growing. (www.wehewehe.org)

“Forgive me if I digress. I cannot tell you who I am unless I tell you why I am. I cannot help you to take a measurement until we both know where we stand” (Winterson, 1997, p. 11)

To begin with myself I must go back to my ancestry. Artisans and tenant farmers. Immigrants. European. Mostly Teutonic. Not noble.

Something about the way I learned my own history, this story, His story, isn't right. It chafes. I cannot explain it. But where to start? How to re-tell it?

Begin...The continent of Europe has known the theft of indigenous land as well. Before the conquistadors, before the pilgrims, there were the Enclosures. And the trials. The conquest of the European continent was sealed with massacre from the beginning. It set the stage for the 500 years that have followed. Despite the bloodshed, we say it occurred after the “dark” ages—during the Renaissance (that hallowed time of re-birth when political revolutionaries became witches and succubae). Ostensibly, they were burned for heresy against God, which conveniently eliminated their voices from the politics of land tenure as well. It is, by now, an old story—rehashed every time a new market stretches its wings. But it is the story of my ancestors, it is probably why they were displaced so long ago, why, presumably, I come from immigrants. The story of capitalism's emergence and that early genocide is only an example of these processes. But it is important to tell, because those fires are not out yet. The witches are still whispering...Their message is needed, if not a bit—

Grimm...

*Where I come from, ancestrally, they have fairy tales.
Stories of warning
forged in the darkness,
and annealed over the smoldering coals
of body fire,
tempered by crucifix
and the theft of land and ancient places.
I suppose it is my birthright to twist and turn.
(Cackle at the Moon)
Oh, how I love a dancing revel!
But I am more for woods and witches,
than balls
or prince's charming
and thrones....*

Listen....can you hear it? Breathe in the smell?

There are ashes that still smolder...

RE-MEMBERING HISTORY TO LAY ALTERNATE FOUNDATIONS

Regarding the emergence of capitalism.

BEING A BRIEF COVERAGE OF SUBSISTENCE DISPLACEMENT AND EMBODIED
VIOLENCE IN EUROPE

The dominant paradigm of the development and information ages would still have us believe that agriculture is a specialization of the poor and backward. (McMichael & Patel, 2004) Yet, the formation and growth of the global capitalist system owes much to agriculture. From its violent imperial beginnings, the subsequent flush of colonial wealth, to the birth of scientific thought continuing through time towards the current neo-liberalism, the economic epistemology that became “capitalism” is thoroughly enmeshed with the control over the production of food and subsistence activities. (McMichael, 2004)

So too, the cultural meta-schemas attached to the word “agriculture” are not only rife with the violence of conquest, but delegitimize many of the ways humans feed themselves. The complexities of human nourishment practices, which are both culturally and geographically multitudinous, simply do not fit the template of what the word agri-culture has come to mean. Or what it has been used to defend.

The etymology of “agriculture” tells us that, “agri” comes from the Greek, agros, or land. it is the second half “Culture” however, which provides a deeper sense of the contested nature of the word. “Culture” derives from the Latin “cultura” but its roots are much deeper and the shifts

this word has gone through parallel shifts in the political and economic practices of land tenure, sovereignty dialogues and labor struggles. Even in its earliest known senses, culture has somewhat conflicting root uses. The proto Indo-European root is “kwel”, which means both to move around and to dwell. It is from this sense that we get “colonus” the Roman word for farmer, meaning he who dwells, but also he who cultivates. In later years the word changes to “colere” which means to tend and to care for, and also, to worship. - it is this sense that is still used in the word “cult.”

Yet cultivate did not connote orderly tillage of crop lands until the fifteenth century, also interestingly when the laws known as the Enclosures were ransacking the peasant cultures of Europe and their commonly held subsistence resources. Soon after, Europeans would begin a five hundred year cycle when things “having to do with tending land” began to connote “tillage.” From then on the ploughing of land was the action which signified care of it. (Harper, 2001) This meaning becomes extremely important when viewed in light of its use in legitimizing the European theft of lands from indigenous peoples via the doctrine of Terra Nullius. Terra Nullius refers most literally, to the doctrine of legalizing colonial possession of territory on the grounds that it was un-used (although inhabited) by indigenous peoples. (Fitzmaurice, 2007) It was primarily the lack of tillage that European’s used to support a declaration of land as Terra Nullius, although the importance of missionizing using evangelical Christian rhetoric as divine justification should not be overlooked.

Terra Nullius has a more figurative, ontological meaning as well. It conceptualizes the Earth as inert, a collection of inanimate things without agency who must be moved mechanically by “external rather than inherent” forces, subject to the will of humankind. (Shiva, 1997) Elizabeth Merchant highlights the importance of the scientific revolution in this trajectory, which

catapulted the European worldview from “the organism to the machine as the dominant metaphor binding the cosmos together.” (Merchant, 1983) While perhaps the most significant changes in European sovereignty practices did occur in this time frame, the epistemological justifications for them were more gradually implemented. The genesis of Terra Nullius as ontology is deeply rooted in the introduction of patriarchy into social society, which necessitates the control over regenerative forces to keep itself in place. Viewed as mechanisms of regenerative control, the relationship of colonial conquest, Christianity, empire and capitalism to patriarchy becomes more apparent.

Control over sustenance is a primary tactic of capitalist control because it suppresses democratic solidarity, shifting the emphasis of political struggle to survival needs and creating divisions in resistant populations. As Sylvia Federici details, the trajectory of capitalist development consistently requires what Marx termed “primitive accumulation”. (Federici, 2003) Though Marx envisioned this process of violently securing resources to fuel capitalist production as a singular event, (Marx, 1909 in Federici, 2003) she demonstrates how it accompanies the opening of each new capitalist market, which is also always tied to dismantling the sovereignty of collectively controlled subsistence systems and parallels the global spread of euro-centric Christianized patriarchy and colonial domination.

Federici opens her history of capitalism and the body with the struggles of the medieval proletariat whose efforts establish an historical class conflict between the popular struggles of subsistence practioners against the forces of elite accumulation which has persisted through time. She also highlights loss of population and peasant (particularly female) sovereignty over reproductive processes (both human and agricultural) as the principle factors in the creation of capitalist class relations. This history disrupts dominant accounts of capitalism by authors who

describe it and the scientific “revolution” as positive developments for humanity. In contrast she articulates the genesis of capitalist relations as the *response* of feudal lords, religious authorities and monarchies to a centuries long social conflict. Capitalism, Federici holds, was a “counter revolution” destroying the possibilities emerging from the anti feudal struggle. (Federici, 2003, p. 21). Her account establishes how the disconnect and devaluing of embodied practices like the reproduction of humans, food and other means of subsistence was accomplished in order to pave the way for capitalism and industry, and the implications of this shift for racial, gendered and spiritual relationships.

Despite widespread acceptance of the “schoolbook portrait of feudal society” which casts it as a politically static world full of resignation and obeisance, Federici reveals a world of “relentless class struggle.” Manor records of the time describe, in minute detail, the regulations concerning serf labour and dues, testifying perhaps to the difficulty of keeping the “landless” in check, likewise records of peasant desertion from manor militias, punishments for refusing to perform corvée (free labour “due” to the resident warlord) abound. The response of elite landholders, both secular and religious, was the introduction of moneyed economy along with currency based payments of rent, taxes and alms. This resulted in large population of homeless peasants, many of whom flocked to urban areas where alternative social structures and political organization flourished.

Federici points out that the heretical movements which rose out of these alternative societies, were less “a deviation from the orthodox doctrine than a protest movement, aspiring to the democratization of social life” Federici continues by discussing heresy both as a cry for social justice via spiritual renewal but also as a political movement which challenged acceptance of social hierarchies, private property and wealth accumulation. The Church was not only a

religious monolith, it was also the largest landowner in Europe and directly responsible for many exploitative and extortive practices against the peasantry. The Church was firmly enmeshed in the commercialization of the middle age economy. They sold absolutions, indulgences and even religious offices; Lea notes, "Things degenerated until the clergy would not bury the dead, baptize, or grant absolution from sin unless they received some compensation."

At the end of the fifteenth century social tensions were high due to the fervor of the heretical movements and the success of the feudal struggle. Shaken by the success of these movements, secular efforts to control peasant revolts against the economic and social control of the church as well as feudal power increased apace. These responses aimed, in Federici's opinion, at destroying solidarity between male and female peasants in part through decriminalizing the rape of peasant women. (Federici, 2003, pp. 47-48) Additionally, the Church responded to these sacra-political critiques with an iron fist. Not only were the doctrines and writing of these groups burned and all evidence of their practices erased from historical texts, the Church executed thousands of heretics through the one of the most prolific and violent arms of state repression ever conceived, The Holy Inquisition. (Federici, 2003, p. 33)

In the end, however, even these violent acts were unable to quell the fervor that the heretical movements inspired. The ultimate suppression of early European peasant struggle was a strategic affair, dependent on its politicization through legalized disenfranchisement followed by religious propaganda campaigns and ultimately, murder. It is important to note that the popular history of constant struggle on the part of the rising bourgeoisie class against the nobility is a myth. Throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth century instances abound where these disparate classes formed alliances, united in suppressing the shared threat of peasant revolt. (p.50)

Federici reminds us of Marx's analysis pointing out that the phrase, "transition to capitalism" belies the violent realities of this time based on "conquest, enslavement, robbery, murder, in brief force" (Marx, 1909 in Federici p.62). Federici argues that Marx's use of primitive accumulation is more accurate because it connects the feudal reaction with the development of the capitalist economy and it identifies the historical and logical conditions for the development of capitalist epistemologies. (p.63)

Yet, since Marx does not account for the transformations that took place in the way labour itself was reproduced, the effect of accumulation on the social position of women or the importance of the witch hunts in the expulsion of European peasants from common lands, his understanding of primitive accumulation is stunted. Federici argues that an integral element of peasant suppression was the intertwined role of violence and disciplining reproductive bodies which was also paramount to the emergence of capitalist relations. This violent cycle first occurred on a large scale in 16th and 17th century Europe and revolved around the introduction of agrarian capitalism.

By examining these issues Federici establishes the integral role gendered violence, ex-appropriation and embodied politics play in the capitalist system, both historically and at present. She discusses how capitalism's success is predicated on types of accumulation that exceed the boundaries of both orthodox Marxist, which locates power in "labour" and "capital" and Foucaultian, which concentrates on productivity and discipline, analyses. Instead Federici illuminates how primitive accumulation is also

"an accumulation of differences and divisions within the working class whereby hierarchies built on gender age and class...[are] planted into the body/(bodies) of the proletariat...[and serve] to intensify and conceal exploitation." (pp.63-64)

These differences did not spontaneously arise; rather, their emergence was systematically fostered by intense periods of mass starvation and displacement brought about by legalized theft of the commons through the Enclosure Acts. Through peasants believed that the confiscation of church lands via the Reformation would result in more equitable distribution of agricultural opportunity, they were deceived. Both church and common lands were parceled up and sold to the highest bidder in a mass theft known as the “Great Plunder.” (Federici, 2003, p. 72) Although the abolition of the open field system created more agricultural product for export, it did not result in increased availability of food stuffs for peasant peoples. Two centuries of rampant starvation crumbled the cooperative structure of village life in Europe as more and more peasants were forced to leave their homes in search of work and nutrition.

Women and older women in particular, were sorely affected by this “transition” because they relied most heavily on communally managed lands for sustenance. This is why Federici supposes that they were so heavily involved in food revolts and struggles against enclosing acts. (p.76) Faced with impoverishment, marriage and reproduction rates fell sharply in the early 17th century.

In response to this labour shortage and concomitant to the political struggles of the Medieval and Elizabethan proletariat, the landed Gentry of Europe, both Protestant and Catholic, as well as the Institution of the Catholic church embarked upon an Age of Genocide, Conquest and Resource Extraction which drew new models for sovereignty and economy, still used today. After the first flush of wealth extracted from colonial invasions however, there was a mass depopulation as indigenous populations fell victim to disease and murder. In short, the blossoming Mercantilist economy, which equated prosperity with large labour forces, was on the verge of collapse. As women had been and continued to be primary forces in the class based struggle

against enclosure and accumulation as well as the physical sites of reproduction of the labour force, Federici asserts that it was necessary to gain control over both their political power and their bodies in order for Capitalism to emerge.

Also important is the introduction of “legal” doctrine in the European political arena, which textualized and historicized the rectitude of conquest, of women’s bodies, the Commons, and any all land deemed to be Terra Nullius. It also established the idea of a universal standard which could be grafted across vast spatial extents, regardless of cultural context. Its legitimacy, which grew through the efforts of Elizabeth Tudor and her advisors in the English court, could then be morally defended through violence and even genocide, if deemed necessary. This added validity to the proselytizing goals of the Spanish and English missionaries and confidently downplayed the role of wealth accumulation, cheap labor and control over resources as the impetus for conquest and exploration.

The push for legalization emanated from England because of the schism between The Vatican and The House of Tudor. Although the establishment of the Protestant *Anglican* Church, by Henry VIII, is often termed “heretical,” it had little to do with the proletarian movements sweeping the European continent. Rather, Henry VIII’s protests against the Catholic Church were to secure a male heir for the Tudor dynasty and to challenge the pope as Rex Mundi, or sovereign of the world. Henry’s critique had nothing to do with the Church’s economic practices, in fact, his own were quite similar. It was in the reign of Henry VIII that the first Enclosures of common land in England were enacted. Further, Henry VIII, following Machiavelli, sought to establish his princely right to govern outside both ancient and Christian custom. (MacMillan, 2006) His daughter, Elizabeth I, who established England as an Imperial force capitalized on this severance from the Catholic Church but also sought to legitimize her actions in the aristocratic

arenas of Europe. To do so she used Roman law, specifically the concepts of *Imperium* and *Dominium* as well as her continued affiliation as a Christian prince to justify her possession of New World territory on an international stage. Elizabeth was obliged to turn to Roman law because common law was geographically specific. While it contained numerous examples of the entrenched nature of patriarchal and elitist values, it was also specifically grounded in the customary practices of Britain and protected the common people's sovereign right to subsistence. (MacMillan, 2006)

To prove her actions as legal to other European sovereigns, Elizabeth looked to Roman imperial texts for evidence. In them, particularly in the works of Justinian, she and her advisors found that *autoritas*, which is the legitimating authority of a monarch, can imposed through *Imperium*, which is the non-royal (i.e. military) enforcement of control over territory. Both the Spanish and the English used *Imperium*, but the English found that *Imperium* is better established when coupled with *Dominium*, in which a controlling power uses settlers to physically inhabit a territory and subdues the original inhabitants through control to establish authority there. (MacMillan, 2006)

The Elizabethan Era also saw the rise of the Queen's council of advisors. John Dee, and many other writers, became favorites of the queen by undertaking to write legal treatises for her, which she then read and used to guide her decrees. These advisors were also granted patents to explore (and plunder) new territory, which they often governed as colonial administrators. (MacMillan, 2006) The use of legislation to legitimize colonial theft, genocide and Christianization is an important one in part because it casts a different light on state formation, a process which lauds the increased reliance on legislation and governance rather than warlord politics and spirituality as evidence of evolutionary progress. In many ways the increasing

legitimacy granted to legislation established the “scriptural economy” as the only valid history. Among other things, relying solely on textual evidence, such as laws created by the elite, allowed for the invisibilization of many vital areas that shaped the past, such as the “bio-power” regime and its vast records of genocide.

The “bio-power” regime emerged in the 16th century via the Witch Hunts, where hundreds of thousands of women were massacred in the first mass attempt to control reproduction on a grand scale. Federici’s analysis of population crisis and embodied sexual politics as the foundational conditions for the emergence of capitalism differ greatly from Foucault’s, who equates the emergence of capitalism with a qualitative improvement, an *increase* in technology that led to the end of famine in Europe. (Foucault, 1990) As the enclosure acts proliferated, women were also expelled from the craft professions, prostitution became even more subsidized and men were encouraged to look on women as the substitute for lands lost to the Enclosures. (Federici, 2003, p. 96)

“In pre-capitalist Europe, women’s subordination to men had been tempered by the fact that they had access to the commons and other communal assets, while in the new capitalist regime women became the commons, as their work was defined as a natural resource, laying out the sphere of market relations” (p.97)

Demonization in the form of literary (discursive) and embodied (cultural) strategies worked to accomplish the expropriation of commonly held resources, but these never would have succeeded if they had not been accompanied by campaigns of terror. Re-iterating the importance of destructive rather than productive notions of power as generative factors in capitalist relationships Federici demonstrates how violence and reproductive control pre-date and co-exist with “discipline” as integral aspects of the capitalist economic system.

Fire Starter

“I try to distinguish, but at crucial moments the space between carefully separated objects collapses and I too am whirled up against my will into the dervish of matter. The difficulty is that every firm step I win out of chaos is a firm step towards...more chaos. I throw a rope bridge, haul myself across the gap, and huddled on the little outcrop, safe for now, observe the view. What is the view? Another gap, another stretch of water. (p. 102)”

There were massive wildfires all around California this year. The summer fires occurred mostly in the North- it looked like the apocalypse in Sacramento for most of July. Over 300,000 acres burned. Autumn's fires occurred mostly in the South and received much greater attention although they affected around a tenth of the acreage destroyed in the summer burns. Wildfires are a natural part of the California landscape, but a century of suppression-based management of wilderness areas has changed Californian fire regimes drastically. Contemporary burns are more likely to get out of control and destroy vast tracts of land then, say, when Indians managed the forests. There are 'natural' climatic reasons for ignition and burning, but the issue of wildfire management has to a lot do with development interest and the nature of “conservation” as practice as well.

Delving into the issue of fire in California opened hundreds of possibility doors. First they prompted me to think metaphorically about this element's relationship to catastrophe in general. Also about the place of disturbance in landscape ecology, trial by fire, the loss of forest and again, how much I hate to be hot, especially when the air is smoky and I can't breathe. And then I thought about how astro-logically, I'm a fire sign- the only one in my immediate family. And about how often I create heat, friction, fire in those filial spaces. I'm often described (decried) as “extreme” by them, especially when I'm starting to get in to another beyond-leftist tirade about the evils of capitalism and patriarchy.

Finally I began think about what a primary place the use of fire has in the story of “what it means to be civilized.” I mean, somewhere presumably, Prometheus is still having his liver eaten daily for giving it to humankind. Then there’s John Wesley Powell, better known for his “turn the desert of the west into a garden so it’ll be of some use to someone dammit” politics which formed the foundation for the dam(n)ming and irrigation craze in the 19th and 20th centuries (Reisner, 1993) who said, “Savages make fire with two pieces of wood; barbarians with flint and steel or pyrites; civilized men by chemistry” (Star Newspaper, 1889) Oh fire is a distinguisher all right, and those who control it are usually the ones with the power to change the landscape.

Fire is an especially integral part of California’s landscape. And as I read more about the myriad complex ways that native Californians used fire as an ecological management tool, the myth of the cultural stereotype “hunter-gatherer” became glaringly simplistic if not downright wrong. Here’s a quotation from Kroeber’s *Handbook of California Indians*, which is still the most commonly available text in many libraries on the subject of California Native Cultures.

“The California Indian secured his variety of foods by techniques that were closely interrelated...Few of the processes involved high skill or long experience for their successful application; none entailed serious danger, material exposure or even strenuous effort...Thus the activities called upon were distinguished by patience simplicity and crude adaptability rather than intense endeavor and accurate specialization” (Kroeber, [1925] 1976)

And then a response from M. Kat Anderson, whose book *Tending the Wild* just might be the most revolutionary piece of ecological literature I’ve ever read,

“Implicit in Kroeber’s critical judgment is the idea that native peoples had not learned how to improve the land. Furthermore there is an idealization of agriculture that places it at the pinnacle of human achievement. Learning how to produce food by intention instead of harvesting it from nature, is frequently considered by archaeologists the most fateful and portentous development in human history. Agriculture enabled surplus accumulation, stable settlement and larger population concentrations, thus creating the foundation of civilization... Looking for agriculture in terms of civilization, early anthropologists were blind to wild lands

shaped by centuries if not millennia of in-depth knowledge and careful management. These activities were swept under the encompassing label of “hunting and gathering” Thus a major historical distortion was created.” (Anderson, *Tending the Wild: Native American Knowledge and the Management of California's Natural Resources*, 2005)

Still reeling from this realization I dove further into a search for alternate histories of my home state. I wondered what else about California I might have been the teensiest bit mistaken about...

“Stabs of time torment me. What use is it to go back over those high rocks that resist erosion? My life seems to be made up of dark matter that pushes out of easy unconsciousness so that I stop and stumble, unable to pass smoothly as other people do. I should like to ramble over the past as if it were a favourite walk. Walk with me, memory to memory, the shared path, the mutual view.

Walk with me. The past lies in wait. it is not behind. It seems to be in front. How else could it trip me as I start to run?” (Winterson, 1997, p. 20)

There are two seasons in California, really: A dry season that runs April through November and a wet season that runs November to March. Although growth and fallowness occur for different species in both seasons, the wet season is when the hills are green and there is abundant water for growth. Sometimes it freezes, but not usually. In the early dry season, following the snow melt of spring, there is an explosion of growth. And then a time of waiting, heat and desiccation, until the winter rains/snows come. I came home in the middle of this season, in June. This story is nominally about heat and race and myth in California, but it also aims to tease out the role of language in constructing understanding and my heated and sometimes stifling relationship with my home state. In the heat of California’s dry season the world hangs on the edge of its sentence. In times of senescence there is not energy enough to grow. But there is time to think.

Out of the frying pan...

I am running, halfheartedly, for the bus, because I do not know exactly when it leaves and I have no wish to remain where I am. The July heat is not as oppressive as it will be in August, only heavily still. Sunrays sucking moisture, an intaking rather than a birth. The central valley’s summer is an infinite refrain of light and warmth from which there is no escape. I should tell you that the Californian heat is an old adversary of mine. I have always hated it.

I fled the searing embrace of these golden hills long ago (if you can’t stand the heat get out of the kitchen). Since I have returned, their aridity paws in renewed frenzy at my pores, demanding penitence. Most people cannot understand why I would leave, especially for seasons replete with doldrums and winter’s sombering aches. I have no trite or easy answers.

More often than not I start up the smoke and mirror game, referring them to my frizzing hair, my parched throat and scores of other vain pretexts which do not get to the core of why I hate the heat. I’m not sure, even with all of the years I have spent away, why I dislike the Californian summer so much. This humbles me a bit. So, this time I have come home with as open a mind as possible.

I guess you could say that the heat and I have reached an uneasy truce. At least, I have lessened my hemming and hawing considerably. My years in the tropics have also given me a bit of cell memory, reminding my skin that it needn't burn quite so badly. Despite these feeble attempts at reconciliation, however, we are still not exactly on speaking terms. In any case, I am anxious for the frigid arms of public transportation's air conditioning systems to embrace me. I hurry.

Frustrated and not a little bit discouraged, I am returning home from a largely unsuccessful day at the nearest University library. The scent of neglected carpeting and unopened books reverberates in my sinuses, while the ancient black and green screens of the reference desk and the puzzled eyebrows of librarians flicker, similarly holographic. Half cocked, their carefully coiffed heads bob with vapid sympathy, "Critical?" "History?" "Native Accounts?" The dissonance of each word strains and shorts their gears, winding them down. Today I have 'discovered' how racism finds sanctuary in ancient Wang computers and etches itself into keyboards helpfully tapped by the nimbly docile fingers of educated women. Perhaps it is the facade of tame benevolence that makes their steely will to misunderstand what I am asking for so aggravating.

All that they have found, or all that they give me, is a 16th century wormhole of a novel, translated by a (no doubt) wan, white faced antiquarian. It is called *Las Sergas de Esplandián*. An Arthurian romance first published in 1510, it chronicles the adventures of a Queen Califia whose mythical realm my state is named for. The spine creaks when I lift the cover, suggesting that I might be the only person who has ever actually opened this book. This I do not interpret to be a good sign. But I have had little luck today, so I resist the temptation to chuck it onto the stacks and settle in to read.

It begins like this:

"Know then that on the right side of the Indies, there is an island called California...and it was peopled by black women, without any man among them, for they lived in the fashion of the Amazons. They were of strong and hardy bodies, of ardent courage and great force. Their island was the strongest in the world with its steep cliffs and rocky shores. Their arms were all of gold, and so was the harness of the wild beasts which they tamed and rode. For in the whole island there was no metal but gold..."

It goes on, in an old school marriage of gold fever and soft core. The Amazons keep man eating Griffins as sort of arsenal-pets and feed every visiting male, as well as any male offspring

they miraculously conceive, to their beasts. Califia is their leader and the author spends many paragraphs defending her ability to be not only large and black, but beautiful and a damn good shot. Already I can see the parallels to the women described in the *Malleus Malificarum*, as baby eating- sex-crazed -leader types who can talk to mythical beasts, I know they're "witches" and thus, bound to be defeated, by godly and devastatingly virile men.

Califia's story follows this line of reasoning to the tee. She travels to the Holy Land and fights on the side of the infidels, though she's never met a Christian before- she just likes a bit of devastation I guess. At the end of the day though, she's taken in by a description of the young English prince Esplandian, who is beautiful and elegant—quite a catch. She vows she will not fight with the English again until she has spoken with the man she's heard tell of.

And here, it gets so ridiculous, I've got to quote directly,

"And he, turning his beautiful eyes upon her beautiful face...in such a way that if she were not yet conquered by the great force of arms, or by the great attacks of her enemies, she was softened and broken by that sight and by her amorous passion, as if she had passed between mallets of iron"

Califia knows she must conquer her passion, because, get this- she was "turned to that native softness which women of nature consider to be a great ornament" Right. Like any self respecting Amazon Queen would actually think like this. But Califia keeps her head, if not her heart, and leaves the palace without making a fool of herself in front of the prince. For his part, Esplandian remains a pious, if not pig headed, hero. He doesn't look at her, even though she's "the most distinguished woman in the world" and before you pass judgment, his distaste was not, "any copperhead prejudice of color, because that prejudice was not yet known" it was just because she was an infidel and he HATED infidels. Which is such a relief- because I was thinking the story might be unfairly biased.

In the end, Califia is predictably conquered and submits to her capture without comment. She disappears from the rest of the story until she is married off to one of Esplandian's cousins. After which the Amazonian kingdom is ended. Califia submits "to the natural generations of men and women," calls him her lord and all is well in the eyes of God and Spain. Uh... I mean, England.

Sigh. Not exactly what I had in mind when I said "Native Accounts of Californian History." I read on to find out that this story was almost like a bible to "explorers" like Cortes

and that it motivated many of their expeditions in the North Pacific. Queen Califia's submission to God mythologized and validated the Spaniard's conquest, not only of the bodies of native women but of all "wild" kingdoms who fell under the "civilizing" arm of Spain. (Polk, 1995) As in many later recountings of Spanish presence in California, the bloodshed is glossed over and discussions of rape and enslavement are almost completely omitted. If my sneaking suspicion that History's constructed glory hides an immense amount of gore has been vindicated, it is a hollow triumph. Unsatiated, I leave these stories to the slow rot of their own obscurity and flee.

So I am running and sweating profusely, when all at once I realize, mid-stride, that there is no tangible monster at my heels. I slow to a walk. Thankfully my deceleration, while not exactly graceful, does not betray how kinetically challenged I can sometimes be, particularly when I am unnerved. Still, it is a fairly pathetic sort of dejected shuffle, because the wind, as it were, is fast leaving my sails. It seems to me that no breeze, inspirational or otherwise, could possibly lift the stifling weight of today's heat- what with all these nagging reminders of the things I cannot outrun.

I am only slightly aware of the hour, but fairly sure my transfer has expired. The bus driver is having a smoke- how can he on a day like this? at the front of the bus. He is huge, jovial, and black, with a wide white smile, which he flashes as I am squinting into my shred of paper. I ask if its 1:40 yet. He smiles, says- 'It's two'. I say, 'damn'. He smiles again, 'You ridin' wit me?' I say, 'yeah'. And he says, 'Well get on then, it's hot.' I am unsure whether this magnanimity is due to breasts or irises-it never occurs to me that it could be just plain old 'fuck the system' kindness- and I don't particularly care. I don't have enough change to pay for a ride home, so objectified or not, I am grateful to be riding at all.

For a moment I am lost in the pleasure of being away from the environment I so endlessly contrive to "affectively connect" with, abjectly reveling in the icy wash of petroleum laced coolant. When my propensity to respond to heat with by becoming increasingly porcine (think pink and shiny, a la Ms Piggy) has calmed to a reasonable rosiness, I begin to look around.

My observation is a subtly practiced voyeurism, garnered from years aboard public transportation. To look, but not look, eyes darting quickly from one place to another so that the disrespect of settling too long on a stranger will not result in confrontation. Meanwhile my ears are taking it all in and stripes of conversation arrange themselves geographically along the aisles.

Back of the bus couple, returning from group session at the outpatient rehab center. She with the three inch roots, he with the LOVE knuckles, parade their desire and domestic trauma, smearing rage and desperation along the seat backs. They are arguing. I look away as soon as possible; their conversation is already volatile and therefore, best tuned out. I know from experience the risks of gawking and that the provocation of blue eyed contact is perhaps the most invasive and insulting of all. Unassumingly mid-placed mothers shush their children, travelling from neighborhoods without parks perhaps, or going downtown to shop. Members of that vast morass we call the service economy are sprinkled like seasoning throughout: baristas with piercings, migrant maids and swing shift gas station attendants.

The dissonance of Labor's schedule does not seem out of place here. Not like it does on the screens and airwaves of early morning talk shows, where the acceptable sphere of being is fleshed out in 30 second intervals through which SUV dreams careen along urban byways and smooth shaves ensure career success. Here, nine to five is only a reality on the first and last busses of the day, those times when the necessary reality of public transportation is momentarily flooded by well meaning bourgeois who elect, but are not forced, to use it. In the right now of this ride, time and space belong to those whose weekends fall out of step with television and the fat Sunday newspaper, erupting on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, when only stooped elders and housewives are about.

Speaking of which, there's just such an elder trying to sit near me. He is not visibly toothless, but definitely of the dentured community, with bright blue eyes twinkling merrily. He does not sit in the rows reserved for old people and the disabled. It could be perhaps, because that's where I am seated. The bus is not full, so I haven't offended any protocols and there's room beside me, but he's too polite to sit down without being introduced first. I suspect that there's not a little bit of pride and concern for virility involved in his avoiding the 'special' seating choice as well. He is after all, no matter how little his life experience proves it, of the race and gender that rules the world. He walks steadily, without a cane, but his progress is excruciatingly slow, each step a triumph. Broad shouldered but rail thin and 'still handsome'.

He winks at me and I check my gaze, recognizing his air of genteel lechery at once. It pervades my interactions with his generation, and despite the fact that I know it's symptomatic of patriarchy, I mind it less than most other of that sickness' manifestations. If I have to choose, I'll

take my objectification with courteously juvenilizing flirtation and a foxtrot lesson any day. It's less invasive for me than the leers of those who profess to be all for equality and then whoop and holler for stiletto heels and waxing. I am in the second row back, so it takes a while for him to get to the seat behind me, but the driver is just finishing his smoke so we aren't moving yet. He's lonely, I can tell by his grin. I know that if I stay here, I'll be in for a conversation. It might seem arrogant to say that I know what's in store already, but I've lots of experience with way older white men. Not in my personal life per se, I just ride the bus a lot and I am a big hit with the over seventy crowd.

I think I must resemble the girls they remember, I look kind of old fashioned. Big blue eyes, bosomy, a pile of blond hair - I exude that Cupie dolled naiveté that older men in particular seem to find so enticing, not to mention non-threatening. At least I exude these things until I open my mouth, at that point my sailoresque vocabulary and anything but demure politics tend to slip out. In any case, I am not prepared to wittily field even a half-serious marriage proposal today, I am too demoralized. So, I smile back and offer him my seat. It's a tried and true method of escape, both deferring to his age and simultaneously putting him out of the running. I'd prefer to take my chances with the driver.

I make my way to the front of the bus, there would have been room in the back, but the cracked out lovers seem dicey. Maybe it's a relic of my geeky/teacher's pet days, but I'd rather stand in the front of the class than be in firing range. Since the mid day route is all of a sudden seething with old people, I head for the space just behind the driver, where there's a wall to lean against, so I don't have to hang on to the handrail (I am smelly from my jog in the inferno).

It's the "conversation with the person in charge" spot, which I normally avoid like the plague. There are, in my experience, really only two types of riders who hang out here. There are those who are buddy buddy with the driver, every day riders or transit employees for the most part and, there are the insane people. I am certainly not a local on this route. So, I am hoping not to appear to be the other kind of rider- the kind that's currently suffering from a lack of medication which makes me believe everyone wants to be friends with me even though I am psychotic.

I wonder if the driver thinks I do not fit the type, if he knows about the types I know about, or if that obsession is purely an "irrational mind trip only I have" thing. I also check to see

if he's using the mirror to look at my tits. It's an "almost-but-not-quite-unconscious" self consciousness, this preparation to steel myself against the uncomfortable resignation that being objectified is just the way it is. And then the imps begin to chatter. "Aren't you more aware of his glance because he's not only male, but young and, gulp...black?" Shit...Caught...Ugh.

Have I actually, on some weird visceral level, bought the social conditioning garbage? Do I view him as what, a possible predator? When he has not, as Mr. Blue Eyed Winky behind me, given me the slightest provocation- and even helped me out. The scripts my body rehearses frighten me, can I really still be such a product of the despicable system I profess to buck? The absurdity and horror of this is shocking. While I am lost in my thoughts and guilt and will to transform my own perspective (not to mention trying to shut the voices up) I forget to do things, like blink. I realize, belatedly, that I am staring into his rearview mirror quite intently. So much for the objective, non-insane, observer.

My case of the unconscious stares means we make eye contact. Sort of. Because he's looking into the mirror where I am reflected and I am seeing his reflection and both of us are also looking through the window at the road ahead. He smiles again and I can tell that not only are his teeth very white, they are also very even. They and his eyes, both grinning, stand out against his skin, like patches of late snow on spring soil. And this fleeting mix of teeth and gaze is like a current of pure atmosphere winding through the canned elixir of the air vents. Like the breeze that blows off the Delta late at night, just when the sheets become unbearably heavy and fever seems inevitable.

Salvation in a smile? Perhaps that's a tall order, but nevertheless, it's this flash of verity that I will remember most about this day; that I carry with me. It's not so much composed of the conversation that follows, though that was important, but the contours of the silent communication that pervaded it. He is laughing at me a little, I think. Caught me wallowing in my pink discomfort. And he's not laughing meanly- just sharply enough to let me take myself a bit less seriously. And its good, to be laughable, and cooled off a bit, if not at all cool. I smile back.

He asks me 'what I been up to' and I have to laugh. Sifting through all the pointless tomes I have opened today, my silent railing at the librarians, my pouty exodus across campus I say, "Umm...I'm researching California history- well, kind of- I'm trying to research the history

they don't like to talk about in schools, all the fucked up shit we're not supposed to admit to, it's hard- actually its been kind of a shitty process, uh... day" He raises an eyebrow at this vomiting of information, but I'd wager it's neither the expulsion nor the profanity that catches his eye- they're both par for the course. Maybe he sees that we're thick in the bounce and go rhythm of bus travel at this point and my feet obviously have transit legs attached, I dunno. In any case I am judged to be alright- if not a bit weird for a white chick, and the chasms are momentarily forded. We...talk.

He asks me if I've heard this one. It's an old story. About how California was named after a Black Amazon Queen. How it was written down by some old Spanish guy in the 16th century. How she was a warrior and a leader. I try not to look surprised that he knows this story. But I am. It shames me, but I am surprised. He is not his "character", "who should be" working class and therefore uneducated, black and therefore less versed in (obscure archaic) 'classical' literature. Plus, it's weird that he's telling about the thing I just read. It's this, finally, that shuts me up so that I just nod. I have heard it, my chin says, but tell me again. And he does.

He tells me things in a language I can't reproduce. But the slide into the lift and fall of narrative is similar enough to recognize. His story is...proud. It's certainly not the "bind the beautiful warrior- she likes it" version I have just recently encountered. In the velvet of his voice, Califia becomes a Black (capital B) Queen who is never conquered, whose presence predates the whole terrible history of theft and slavery, whose memory is a defense for her people. I become a novitiate, an amateur, entranced.

Somewhere, in this musical of transformation, something in my mind clicks and I remember. I remember the sounds of pidgin in my ears. The first petulant flash of indignant exclusion and the subsequent humble crawl towards understanding. Rumbling through the forests of Puna in Honolulu's cast off busses, ukulele chords and the blur of fast paced gossip flying out into the storm through the missing windows. The Green! The feel of the trades on my cheek. The hardened eyes of a local girl, challenging me, her moke⁷ boyfriend's muscles behind her, ensuring my silence, "What, you like sit? I sitting here first, eh? ...Fucking haole."

⁷ A 'local' usually means that the person is a descendent of plantation labourers, is often of mixed racial blood, speaks pidgin and is not white. 'Moke' is a pidgin word, it translates to mean means something like a (usually) Native Hawaiian thuggy redneck type A haole is a white person, but can also denote a bossy/pushy/mainlander type.

How finally, I learned to translate the cartography of this conversation in different ways, casting off the poor me- acknowledging that my white presence on the bus, a thoroughly 'local' environment was, for her, the same trespass as all the haoles before me. And that that was valid to me too. I learned, through my fumbling with what was often called an "accent" and hardly ever acknowledged by the tourist books or many of my professors as "language", how the topology of communication can embody the wars that class and race wage. What happens to children in the forcing of "proper" English.

Hawaiian pidgin changed the way I see the communications called "dialect", "creole", and "slang." Made me reject what is attached to these distinctions. And so, when I listen with these ears, I can hear the bits of a language history in how he speaks. Undercurrents of enslavement, freedom, enduring strength, and persistent wisdom emerge between the syllables. They are not the word stories of my experience, but in his telling I can glimpse a bit of what he does not explain to me. I begin, once again, to try and understand.

Sometimes in my everyday speech, a similar inflection or syntax rolls off my tongue without premeditation. This happens. There is no pure language, right? It ceaselessly becomes. So his stories, her voice, have become part of me- when they echo in my speech it is a re-memory of the lessons they have taught me. Am I defending? Maybe. It is because I hope that this "re-memory" is not symbolic of my cultural predilection to assimilate, acquire and otherwise appropriate other people's truths. On the day of this story though, this fear does not obsess me. I can ripple with appreciation for being present in a tale well told.

We turn a corner and a scene unfolds, disrupting his yarn. And my reverie... There is a police car. A black man with hands behind him on the hood. Several uniformed white men shouting. They all have guns, he does not. There is no discernible crime, no disruption of everyday life that I can see. Except theirs. The slender bond extending between the driver and I quivers- I am reminded of what structures keep us mired in place. What to do?

My jaw is set, teeth gritted. The disgust is evident. He looks at me square in the eye. I do not look away, but I cannot be cool. Cannot let the understanding flow, gotta take up space, open my big mouth. To defend. To disassociate. To excuse. I whisper, "God damn it. I've been away a long time you know? Sacramento is such a segregated place-and I can't tell anymore if it's always been like this and I am only now seeing it- or if it's gotten worse." He doesn't

answer this, he tells me about how people are poor and angry, the ways this has become more acute in the last few years. I nod, speak, "Despair is terrible motivator." Our eyes meet again and still, he smiles, but ruefully now.

At the next stop two black ladies get on. They and the driver exchange pleasantries and I do not miss the quick incline of their eyes towards the outside drama. The slow and almost imperceptible shake of their heads. The recognition that passes between them. Recognition I do not envy, but cannot share. I fade into the background as best I can, looking out the window. To the streets and people and life which pass me by, to the noises silenced by windows and the hum of the air conditioning.

The origins of the California myth, which I read in the library and which the bus driver also imparted to me, are culled from *Las Sergas de Esplandián* by García Rodríguez de Montalvo. *Las Sergas* is an addendum to a classical chivalric cycle called *Amadis of Gaul*, which Montalvo translated. The three volume *Amadis of Gaul* was probably first written in the fourteenth century and resembles many other Arthurian romances, replete with dragons, ugly priestesses that protect errant knights of God and the slaying of infidels. The usual Christianized revision of pagan myth, nothing surprising. The fourth volume however, is interesting because its storyline was probably conceived of by Montalvo himself and written in the Age of "Discovery." Therefore the stories it tells are as much glorifications of the 16th century political state as they are clues to how imperialist ideology has been mythologized.

Although the Spanish believed they had finally found the gilded isle of California when they reached the peninsula of what is now called Baja, no gold was ever found there. So, the Spanish had to content themselves with the conquest of land and dark peoples (all of whom were called black, not just those of African descent) in the southern reaches of the present day state. Due to the impenetrable geography of deserts and high mountains that separated Baja from Alta California, they largely ignored the interior northern areas (which is where, eventually, gold was "discovered") for almost two centuries. In fact, California was cartographically represented (to Europe) as an island well into the eighteenth century. (Polk, 1995)

The intriguing part of the telling I read in the library, is that it's a 19th century translation of the 16th century work written by an Edward Everett Hale and re-printed in the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine in 1864. This places it before the end of the Civil War and the Emancipation

Proclamation, a time when the state of California was still sanctioning wide spread genocide of indigenous peoples and selling off children as slaves to landowners. (John Sutter, a local 'hero' in my hometown Sacramento's history, was one of the early slave owners of California). Oddly, the language of the Atlantic Monthly article is written like this queen actually did exist 555 years before, and that her realm actually was in the geographic location of the present day state. (Hale, 1864, p. 225)

In Hale's retelling, California is not only metaphorically the wild untamed vixen, secretly crying to be ravished by God and the arm of a strong white man, the myth is translated into to truth and grafted onto a material geography. In twenty pages, the history of the native Californians as they tell it, almost their very existence, has been eclipsed. What remains is a vast wilderness, whose unpredictability is both romanticized as a wanton woman and decried as an overly natural obstacle standing in the way of civilization.

As in the time of Cortes, it remained politically important in 1864 to mythologize the California landscape as too wild to exist unchained. She must be tamed, married, defeated, dammed. In terms of Californian history 1864 is technically post "gold rush", but still written in the thick of the floods that followed it. Floods of wealth that followed the rape of the placer's golden nuggets. Floods of malaria and typhoid that trailed the industrial slag of the foundries through the rivers' channels; of tuberculosis that chased the belch of factories sprung up in the wake of the corporatized mining take over. Floods of sediment that choked the spawning grounds of salmon and left their carcasses to rot in the lowlands, far from their Sierran birth places. And floods of water that filled the great valley in 1862, making it a shallow lake. Hydraulic mining had finally washed away topsoil that had reined the spring deluge in for millennia. The water courses raged in response. It was this flood that ushered in public support for the first dams and irrigation plans. Citing the health of humanity and not the thirst for profit, the wild Rivers flowing into the great Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys were reclaimed from themselves and civilized to serve. (Isenberg, 2005) This is one reading.

Another story emerges when I read the mythic queen from the perspective of my new found sage. In his mouth, Califia reveals herself differently. She's more Angela Davis, less Princess Leia in Jabba the Hutt's palace. Through his teaching, my understanding of the founding and peopling and mythologizing of California becomes different. History changes. In

both stories Queen Califia is an Amazon fighter, a black pantheress among women. But in the driver's retelling, she survives as she is introduced - an icon of Black strength. She does not require imprisonment. She does not replace indigenous stories either, because she doesn't need to be flesh in order to be real. In the silent spaces of what he does not tell me she may well have been cast as a gilded Terra Nullius, waiting to be penetrated by Spanish swords, consumed by them in marriage and then forgotten. But she is not constituted by that story any more, she is also other things.

Still, I have to wonder, even if Califia has survived her enslavement and thrives in mythic re-imagining, to what extent have the bodies, both human and otherwise, of California shared in this liberation? For whom is each story important? Is editing the tale of Montalvo to forget how the conquistadores accomplished their conquest? How the evangelism of cross and sword became fused? How the darkness of soil was personified in the character of Black Woman, whose combination of sex and strength were cause enough to justify her enslavement and rape?

Though it is an old and tired tale for some, told many times, in many places, it is perhaps not shared between bodies of every race. And because one race in particular determines what stories are told in history's classrooms (and it ain't the ones 'of color') these are still not cast as nightmares. Perhaps tales of colonization are no longer as resplendent with glory and adventure as they were in the nineteenth century, but they persist in being written as necessary steps to the amazing modern societies of today. So it remains important to tell them critically, to make visible what they hide in 'romantic' language.

But to take Queen Califia and tell the stories that occur outside of the conquistadores' narrow line of sight- that is important too. Because then the soil and humans and trees, all those bodies who were and continue to be violated by the trajectory of conquest oriented thinking, can speak. Their words can communicate beyond the small fables capitalist colonialism writes for them. And this is not often suggested in history classes either.

The landscape of California abounds with "stories" and "languages" that bend and exceed the boundaries often placed on words. For instance, if, when you imagine "land cultivated for food", or agriculture, you can only conjure a field ordered in rows, burgeoning with recognizable grain and worked by 'virtually' enslaved labour- you will not see any other landscape, whether it is extensively manipulated, heavily harvested or not, as consciously

cultivated. You will not see oak groves as staples. Even if they are tended and passed through family lines for thousands of years you will not think, 'orchard.' You will not see a tangle of marsh sedge spilling seasonally over the landscape without the chains of dams and think, 'place of well managed fiber production.' Because the words you use have no space for these ways of nourishing, the material landscape will not signify the imprints of this history to you, even the idea that they are meritorious, productive, intelligent and wise cannot exist. (Hinton, 1994) So then, even if you are told (By a writer? A bus driving scholar? A homeless shaman?) that industrial capitalist economies devalue agricultural pursuits, you can only ever devalue a sliver of the ways that humans nourish themselves and each other. So much depends on your lens, on your linguistic boundaries. By you, I mean me.

In my re-seeing of Sacramento streets something similar is occurring. I am realizing that the presence of police has come to seem unsafe to me, even if it is probably not my body they might unfairly harass. Admitting, accepting, that I do not share an experience because what I have experienced is undeserved racial privilege, allows different translations of scenes like the one I witnessed to emerge. They may have always existed - the 'difference' I am speaking of is a personal one. One that admits how living in racially privileged body helps me to confuse "what exists", with "what exists to me." These 'revelations' shouldn't be interpreted as self congratulatory. They simply signify an awareness that my conception of language, my responsibility towards it, is broadening, or maybe, becoming thicker, which is to say, that I confess its narrowness.

And so to me, Califia and California always exist in a multiplicity of realities. What remains the imperative lesson for me is that in neither case is she mine to claim. Why? Not because I cannot admire her or learn from her stories. I do. But because I am descended from settlers and the act of presuming proprietary access is a historical trajectory whose bonds I struggle to break, the action of "claiming" is one I need to be particularly sensitive to. Today, and in a voice/space unlikely enough to teach me a lesson, history has become a thing shared; escaping and rewriting the bonds of what has been preserved by the victors.

When I say that History needs revision I mean that my eyes are too conditioned to see truth in text to be trustworthy. So many stories are not granted space in the halls where knowledge is imparted. It is one thing to feel discouraged by this lack of information on the

shelf; it is quite another go outside of where the shelves are located and accept as similar gospel, revere as equally scholarly, the analysis of bus drivers and the tales that orphaned oak groves whisper. I think the implications are different. Often, what you experience in the world around you and how you perceive and value the passing of space and time depends on what avenues exist in your language to express these ideas. And what constitutes language for you. And what does not. And what does not.

The prophet of my acquaintance and I converse amicably. But we still speak through mirrors. He slays my preconceptions with brief and eloquent slang, punctuated with wry laughter and that easy smile. With each turn of the steering wheel, he tosses them back to me, a volley which is both friendly and deadly serious. As if to say, 'Which of these are you willing to embrace? Which will you suffer to roll about the aisles like an orphaned water bottle, clattering too noisily for anyone to claim?'

Perhaps it's owing to the material conditions under which this exchange occurs that our reflections are closer than our bodies will ever be. I think not. There is a tomorrow in this story. But there is no sequel, when I see him again and we have a beer after work and build the threads of lasting friendship, breaking the barriers of race stone by stone. We smile for hours in the space of moments. The one on the passenger side of this tiny and yet, incalculable divide, who is also just 'me', descends into the heat she cannot escape, volumes ripe on her tongue and silent. She breathes it in, as if for the first time. The door closes, the bus rolls on.

WATER

"Written on the body is a secret code only visible in certain lights: the accumulations of a lifetime gather there. In places the palimpsest is so heavily worked that the letters feel like Braille."

~Jeannette Winterson

GUIDE TO THE ELEMENT

What happens to a body is felt in its heart. Is inscribed upon it as blood flows through and recirculates. In the cycle of cleanse, animate, return, experience becomes embodied. On the body of this planet, land is dwarfed in Water's presence. Water is what irrigates and what dilutes. Water is feminized. The universal solvent. Water feels, it is emotion inhabiting the particulars of experience. Water's strength is not structured. It shapes bodies of land, as affect and habitus shape bodies of identity. Water's force is not rational. Water is the affective moment and also the change itself. It has no decreed contour, it adapts, negotiates, flows. Water bears burdens. Carries sediment. Extinguishes. Hydrates. Pools. Erodes. We are made of mostly water.

Rivers are important keystones in any story of California, ecological, historical, agricultural, or cultural. It is, overall, an arid landscape. It does not adhere to the four season model and the land is dependent on river moisture (rather than rain) to save it from desiccation during the long months of the dry season. I grew up at the confluence of three river systems, the Sacramento, the American and

the Cosumnes. The Sacramento river travels from the transverse ranges of the north near Mt Shasta to the delta and the Suisun Bay near San Francisco. It is the largest river in California.

The American River runs from the Sierras to join with the Sacramento in the town of the same name. It runs incidentally, about a km from my parents' house who live in the heart of the city. In its upper reaches gold was discovered and the sediment of the mountains was washed away through hydraulic mining. The damage was great. Isenberg says,

"The raised riverbeds of the Yuba, Bear, Feather and American caused spring freshets to overtop the natural levees of the rivers, inundating riverine farmlands with a watery mixture of sand and gravel that farmers dubbed "slickens." The mixture was poisonous to both animals and soil. It was deficient in phosphorous and nitrogen; nothing would grow in it...One farmer...estimated that twelve thousand acres of farmland between the mouth of the Yuba and the Sierra foothills had been similarly destroyed" (Isenberg, 2005)

The riverine wildlife is tenacious though. It is slowly returning~ my sister once saw a coyote in the middle of a city street. This is the river where my parents' water supply comes from.

The third river is the Cosumnes, it comes from a Miwok word meaning people of the salmon. It is one of the last remaining undamm(n)ed rivers in California. It is the watershed of my childhood. It also houses one of the last refuges for riparian woodland in the state. I fell in love with the Cosumnes river this summer. It was the key to healing my, ahem, rocky relationship (okay, repugnance) with the landscape of my youth.

All these rivers are part of the Sacramento River's watershed. This watershed was my watershed. I am a re-identifying as a child of this great river's basin. Borne through it's legs. Dependent upon it's currents.

THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter takes the form of a handmade (as yet unbound and still unfinished) book entitled "this.dam.nation." A held thing; metaphorically arranged so as to illicit fluid, emotive connections not easily grafted into prose. Water is what drama eclipses another, what rides undercurrents, what lurks...these connections are layered, visual, tactile. This is an encounter not able to be easily or homogenously reproduced but meant to be intimately and materially shared.

This.dam.nation weaves the flows of three embodied narratives into a collage where layers of text and color emerge and retreat. Its shape is based on the Sacramento River basin. The frontispiece contains the self portrait "The topography of Ho(me)." This photo imposes the topography of California and the Sacramento River watershed on my physical body to suggest the inter-embeddedness of body, sensation and memory.

The cover, made of hand-dyed linen, displayed the multifaceted nature of the title, which is meant to be read in three ways, corresponding to three major (but not prescriptive) currents that flow through the river.

- **This Damnation:** the stifling of emotion, grief specifically and its relation to the practice of misogyny. The role of casting emotion as witchcraft, the interplay of embodied intelligence and original sin. This is woven into a personal story of my family, my uncle's death the female culture of my childhood. Healing.
- **This Dam Nation:** About rivers, species, ecosystems. The use of Dams in CA to facilitate irrigated agriculture and industry in general. The detrimental effects of dams and industrial agriculture on ecology. The persistence of wetlands and the possibilities of free flowing floodplains.
- **This Damn Nation:** Coming to terms with US/CA/my history: native genocide and slavery as contemporary with and causal to "progress". The fear of continuing the hydrologic cycle of a new era with an old era's continued denial as experienced through the 2008 presidential election/inauguration. The rehearsal of the "Great American Lie" and the undercurrents of struggle that make my US identity problematic for me. Floods of people and protest, hope.

The piece looks at three bodies, the body of self, the body of the earth and the body politic, embedding them in the same landscape. The river cuts through these earthly bodies but is also a part of them, acting as both material and metaphoric carrier. What is visible in this river of Ho(me) are glimpses of a consciously affective, artistically-textual response to my thesis process. It is perhaps more difficult to see some of the deeper currents flowing through between the bodies of the river and me. What we do not 'say'. The voices of the bodies and their landscape exist as material realities but their representation is openly subjective, confessional even.

This river is also an exploration of subjectivity and what it means to be subjected. Judith Butler says that, "The body is not a site on which a construction takes place it is a destruction on the occasion of which a subject is formed." (Butler, 2001) This is true. A river erodes. it carries sediment. Nevertheless, this.dam.nation was a labor intensive artistic creation. I have handled my own constructions of self~river~nation for days on end. I have layered them. I have fought with, projected, cut out, stared at, shaped and glued them. Printed. Embossed. Stitched. Painted. Re-arranged. this.dam.nation is a collage of emotion and current. Both are true.

Several 'finished poems' appear within this.dam.nation. They are neither more nor less important than any other part of the work. They are just more intentionally structured to be metaphoric. Here they are:

Damned

Among others,
The California Bureau of Reclamation
Takes as its destiny made manifest,
The sometimes hard to grasp fact~
That what the earth has a mind to clothe herself in
And how the precise and changing arrangement of rivers and streams
Will cascade, just so,
following the stony shantung curves of the Pacific plate,
expertly tailored to pool
in the velveteen marshes of her nether regions.
Are these merely
The misguided whims of a vastly embodied paragon,
Recalcitrantly celebrating the hysteric sex.
Accessories to harlotry.
Easily rectified.

Look now!

The victorious march of the silted gospel!
Behold! The indolent prurience of creation
is Redeemed.

We decree that

You shall be Baptized by the irrigated triumph of progress!

Sinner, prostrate yourself!

(kneel to the concrete idols damming their success)

Confess!

(The wounds of each newly carved current reveal the keen sluice of their mastery.)

And she breathes green now~

Birthing monsters of aborted process,

fetused and still profitable.

She delivers into hungry pockets

the freakish progeny of infinite bloom.

Steel nurseries,

like leeches dotting hysteric wrists,

are sown to suckle them.

So that in offices decently absent from the mess of birthing places
they can be blind to erosion's hemorrhage.

Because there is nothing to see...

The calicoed dress of the prairies is *(not)* ripped clean,
The delta's vast legs are
(not) spread all akimbo.
The mountaintops are
(not) smeared with petroleum laced greasepaint of suburbia.
And the bottomlands do
(not) starve on their diet of scraps tossed from the war machine.

In the interest of spectacle
they feign pity and spoil her.
Treating each topography to
maniacal makeovers of leisure and style.

Look again!

Tottering on heels stiletto'd by levy and bridge, she is regaled
with the skeletal form of a fashionista.
Surgically stitched into the fantastic heresy of genetic glamour
and carefully gilded, to hide the addict's bruising in her veins.

'How beautiful it is', they say,
This Golden State...

Patriarch

All of a sudden he is old.
Not doddering
but there is the threat
of Alzheimer's and diabetic infirmity
which loom monolithic in the near future,
eclipsing my combative forecasts .
If the fragility concealed behind the patriarchal mask
is no more real than it ever was,
the subtle cracking of virility's greasepaint
confers upon me a compassion
which finally, is fiercely gentle.
And so my heart is bent to the sympathetic conditions of mortality
and anger ebbs in favor of affection.
And the styptic of tenderness precludes retribution.
There is only the whisper of authority fading into forgetfulness
and the shame of casting my youth
across the chasms of our debates
like a weapon~
further wounding
my shattered Goliath,
who has become Saul.
Another old man,
whom I love,
With only the harp of his long dead David
to sing him back
from madness
and the dream of that lost throne.

Litany

There are no basket weavers in my lineage.
No marsh walkers,
No one with steps like sphagnum and diffused light.
No fishers,
(except of men.)
I know the myriad sedges grow
difference underground
like the thread of endless webs,
that where
is their warp.

But little else.

Without preamble
I want to learn their plaiting~
How winding the twist of season's turn
lends strength, or does not.
How fingers turn self into weft.
How each discrete fiber is
sheathed and then
deftly coiled into
an umbilicus of belonging.

This trespass is not defensible.
Lay my hands idly
by the slippery banks of the slough,
where the pondweed chokes movement
and tiny bugs make their own intrusions.

I have been a stitcher of color without record,
fawning over arabesques and rainbows.
Blind to their reminiscence.
To the terrible embroideries my ancestry wreaks,
gridding the undulate fabric of wetted lands.
Sutures of artifice,
and not essence.

This is no way to grasp a weaving.
Those that ply leave
ephemeral imprints along the footpath,
barely discernible hollows that dent the morning fog
and are gone by noontime.

Curve my tread
arching instep to the sinuous nap of flood and fallow.
Leave the rushes unskined.
Let the dew ret what needs keeping.
To bend spooled skeletons of soaked tree bones,
ravel the secret cacophony of tules
into distinct tones of simple and separate stitch,
or mould the reedy muscles of recollection
around a loop of bird song,

requires invitation.

Perhaps someday,
if I learn to listen,
and frog clack maps
a wending path
through this unstable ground,
I will hear those moments when
senescence spirals freely into the spaces of overflow,
with nostrils unhindered by rot.
When serpentine reflections surface
and ask to be woven
with stitches fine enough
to hold the meandering of phantoms and water.
Then,
with eyes peeled to the bast of history,
I may begin to gather.

Dirge

Hel's smile,
which is gap toothed, black eyed
and still lovely,
brings me prophetic baskets
of funeral flowers at night.
Wreaths that wither slowly
and encircle the living.
A pastel screen of fantasy
to stave off the ghoulish light
and the shriek of evening's Mare,
who relishes their joyful canter.

Out of the shadows,
the arms of women long dead
weave delicate as steel string.
From purgatorial prisons
wraithbones reach,
sliding through the bars of salvation.
The tendons of their sex
still hardened and flexible.
Litanies of pacification
still coppery on their breath.
They find no rest.

In early hours
the remnant odors of coffee and hearth ash
render them wakeful,
it is habit,
no more.

Solicitous because I notice them.
Their advice wafts across the bedclothes
sequencing the proper choreography of grief:
The quick step of keening
too quickly followed by sunrise.
Mornings after,
filling tear ducts with
breakfasts of eggs and regret.

To pluck the chord of requiem,
requires the base line experience.
Now grief, now life, now laughter.
The eerie waltz of care and stoic nonchalance.
My feet, dizzied by their sorrow's operation, stumble.

We are not friendly.

But in somniatic reveries
I become their acolyte.

Still projecting silent kaleidoscopes,
onto the family room's wall.
Painting swirls of lucid rebellion
with milky substance.
It dries clear.
Most spills translucent,
and un-drunk,
onto the floor.

No use crying girl.
These things cut.
Best to sweep it clean.

The percussive laughter of dust and mop
is as fixed as the ancient submission,
we bend to the rhythm.
I wonder,
what lurks in bodies long dead
still so endlessly infatuated with minutiae?
Only the refrain of labour.
Activities of no account,
intimations to deaden rotted nerves that still jangle.
Tucked further within,
tethered to their ghostly tedium,
are the quietly epic traditions of gesture.
I think

this ceaseless vying
makes space for little else.
Like pausing to finger the cobweb between sorrow and joy.
The proximate ecstasy of pleasure and pain.
Like hearing all of this
and feeling different shame.

Kapu Kai

They were many.
I did not count the people strewn amongst friendly ghosts,
All waist deep
in water where silence hung
deafening,
Songs of streaming backs whetted with cloaks of hair.
Each face
coaxing
the possibility of sunlight into being.
The veil of history pulled back like skin,
revealing muscle and bone.
Chords of revolution
plucked taut against the tendons of practice and ancestry,
rolling tide like,
to the tip of each tongue.
And no one spoke.

The interlude of self distracts me.
I become aware of these feet,
practiced
in the art of quiet invasion.
This hand
poised to offer answers
even to questions unasked.
Shamed by my incessant permutation
of magic
into spectacle.
Eyes flashing the confrontation
of pale crimes in whose shadow my body walks,
She touches my forehead with the sea.
And I listen.
To these bodies of Clouds made flesh
whose chanting feeds the sky .
Long pregnant with memory.
Birthing future storms.

As the close of this project loom before me and this.dam.nation remains unfinished I have decided to include the text of the piece so that readers can follow the story. It can be found on the CD which accompanies this document along with slides of the project pieces finished so far. The notes to the text are as follows:

Notes to Pages 1-7:

Groundwater:

The Sacramento River draws from many different aquifers, but its headwaters come from the Northern California Basin Fill Aquifer region. It has a complex geological history and sediment makeup but is mostly basalt gravel. Depth and permeability varies from 300-1700 meters. (USGS, 2009)

Headwaters: The headwaters of The Sacramento River are high in the Transverse Ranges of Northern California. There is a designated source spot is called Big Springs in Mount Shasta City Park, but this spring feeds into Lake Siskiyou which is also fed by the North, South and Middle Forks of the Sacramento River. These three forks were my inspiration for this.dam.nation. (Mt. Shasta Recreation and Parks District, 2009) (USGS, 2008)

"begotten not made" ~ Quote from the ELCA (Lutheran) version of the Nicene Creed. The one I grew up with:

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

"like lilies" ~ Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. (Matthew 6:28-29) (The Latin Vulgate Bible (Stuttgart Edition), 2005)

"tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow" ~

*To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,*

*That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.*

Macbeth Act 5, scene 5, 19~28

(Gabrukiewicz, 1999) (Gudde, 1949) (Anderson, Tending the Wild: Native American Knowledge and the Management of California's Natural Resources) (Harris, 1991) (Isenberg, 2005) (Konkow Valley Band of Maidu, 2007) (Winnemem Wintu Tribe) (Norton, 1979) (Choy, 2007) (An Act for the Government and Protection of Indians, 1850)

Notes to Page 8

The DAM:

Res ipsa Loquitur. Latin. "The thing stands for itself." Used in legal cases to demonstrate negligence that is obvious enough to be self explanatory, suggests an open and shut case (Res Ipsa Loquitur, 2009)

*"benedixitque illis Deus et ait crescite et multiplicamini et replete terram
et subicite eam et dominamini piscibus maris et volatilibus caeli et universis animantibus
quae moventur super terram"*

Genesis 1:28 Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Genesis 1:28

"mulieri quoque dixit multiplicabo aerumnas tuas et conceptus tuos in dolore partes filios et sub viri potestate eris et ipse dominabitur tui"

Genesis 3:16

Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee (The Latin Vulgate Bible (Stuttgart Edition), 2005)

(Stene, Eric A., 2009) (An Act for the Government and Protection of Indians, 1850) (Summer, 1991)

Notes to Page 9:

(Allen, Oskar~Cole, & Woelfle~Erskine, 2007) (Pyne, 2001) (di Franco, Serpentine, 2003) (Goings, 2009)

Notes to Page 10:

(Hobbes, 1962) (Lazarus, 2009)

Notes to Page 11:

(Smith, 1789)

Notes to Page 12:

(Norton, 1979), *Quote from a Humboldt Times Editorial, 1861, in (Norton, 1979) p.11*

Notes to Page 13: (US Declaration of Independence) (di Franco, Grand Canyon, 2001) (Winnemem Wintu Tribe)

Page 15:

(Summer, 1991) (Sullivan, 1839)

Luke 1:16~18 (The Latin Vulgate Bible (Stuttgart Edition), 2005)

My soul doth magnify the Lord,
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my saviour.
For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden: for behold from henceforth all generations
shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath done great things to me,
and holy is his name.
And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.
He hath shewed strength with his arm;
he hath scattered the proud
in the imagination of his heart.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and
hath exalted the lowly.
He hath filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he hath sent empty away.

Magnificat anima mea Dominum:
et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.
Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae:
ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est:
et sanctum nomen ejus.
Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies timentibus eum.

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo:
dispersit superbos
mente cordis sui.
Deposuit potentes de sede, et
exaltavit humiles.
Esurientes implevit bonis:
et divites dimisit inanes.

Notes to pages 16-19

(Bakker, 1981) (Guthman, 2001) (Kegley, 2008) (Obama, 2009)

Notes to Page 20:

Prophecy by Kate Luckie, Wintu Medicine Woman in (Margolin, 1993)

Notes to page 23:

(Lincoln, 1863)

King James Bible: Luke 23:13

Invalid source specified.

EARTH

Guide to the Element

"Here time turns into space."

**Where? Here
is what bears us.
What grounds. Is what
ground is. Is what grows.
Things. Those that are root-
bound live here. We live where.
Earth is the acting of life. The
doing of tending. O Planet. Limbs
have few words. There is
memory in gesture, in Season's
tick and tock of telling. Earth is
its records. And on what life is
recorded. Where refrain
makes myth manifest.
Earth is a body
which feeds and
what Matters.**

The Encounter

Like Water, part of Earth's project is a held thing, like a family album or a scrapbook of sorts. The pieces that comprise Earthly Things alternate between the pastness of California, my metaphoric engagement with them and the material activities I pursued during this thesis process. The themes of Earth are the doing of learning and the tending of life. This encounter takes measure of two seasons' worth of relating in earth time. It is a re-membered chronology.

There are collaged pieces that intersperse my painstakingly constructed poems with casually collected images that wrestle with history book history, capitalist society and placing myself in California. Interspersed are interpretations of vaguely dated journals, shopping lists, menus, and letters to friends and lovers- all memorabilia from my research. They are records, many of them dusted off from the rubbish bin, they were not drafted for permanence. My photo journal is here too, in an abbreviated and re-membered state. There are fewer words to encounter here because Earth is the body of gesture's story. In Earthly Things my experience of approaching sovereignty is encountered via the creation of things, in re-membered action, through taste and texture.

I found myself engaged in a lot of material work whenever I travelled to California: teaching others about pickling and preserving, home maintenance, house sitting, child care, cooking, baking and the like, which kept my hands too busy to write. I also found it was difficult to spend the vast spaces of time alone I felt were required, to 'journal' effectively through text. I did write sometimes, when I had time and it struck me, mostly using stream of consciousness or poetic techniques. The majority of my non-communal time however, was spent reading and researching rather than writing.

Photographs were interesting to me as a medium/method because they capture images, which I metaphorically relate to the capture of peoples, the construction of history and the “arborescent consciousness” Deleuze and Guattari speak to (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). As Harraway says, “to make an exact image is to insure against disappearance, to cannibalize life until it is safely and permanently a specular image, a ghost. It arrest(s) decay” (Harraway, 1984) When I look at photographs, especially snapshots, I often forget about agency. That the image is framed seems somehow less important in view of its accurate depiction of bodies. This disturbs me. I wanted to incorporate photography in order to confront these demons.

Photos became almost imperative as my journaling method, however, for practical reasons. They were quick and I could take them without spoiling a dish on the stove, letting a six year old trash the house or even, missing valuable conversation time with those around me. The photos aren’t necessarily composition oriented, they are more “moment” oriented, taken to provide myself with synesthetic clues that aid me in re-memembering my experiences. Many of them attempt to evoke a certain smell, texture or light. They are poetic, metaphoric in the sense that they elaborate or comment on the process of “seeing-as, which Zwicke says “happens as if by magic” and yet is “impossible without prior experience.” (Zwicky, 2008, p. §1)

Although I tried to take them consciously, filing away my feelings and thoughts for later perusal, I am not the author of many of the images. During this thesis process, the camera was a communal tool. I did not take all of the pictures I have included in the project. The photos are all posthumously titled and cropped by me but they are essentially, authorless. Therefore I cannot always account for what the photograph was meant to memorialize. It is when I re-member the event, that the photograph can exceed its capturing past. I use the photos in this thesis as synesthetic triggers, meant to evoke memory or affective response but not accuracy. They are not

meant to stand autonomously. They are condiments, pickles. Tasty on their own, but preserved in order to compliment other things.

And so taste and smell and touch become integral parts of this project. Can I tell you about the last vestiges of the riparian forests, the orgy of berry picking, and the scent of the California sun as well if you do not taste it? When you integrate these tastes and stories with your own stories, jams, sweetness and history then we begin to become holistically known. Memory made material, both literally and figuratively digested. I think, this is the way myth is made real.

These are the crumbs of what happened.

Everything is personal is ecological is political.

Everything is related.

Here are (some of) my relatives.

This “book is not an image of the world”⁸

It is pieces of ho(me).

⁸ “the book is not an image of the world. It forms a rhizome with the world, there is an aparallel evolution of the book and the world” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 11)

Summations

David Sutton elaborates on the corporally experienced aspects of memory as culturally constructed memory sites and therefore as synesthetic. (Sutton, 2005) Synesthesia is the conjunction of many senses into one experience. As Massumi points out, “Synesthetic forms involve many sense dimensions experienced as events not reflected upon” they are methods of bringing “pastness” or memory into “present perception and recombined with an experience of movement.” (Massumi, 2002, p. 186) Intentionally experiencing something synesthetically then, is a way of bringing experiencing pasts into the present, rhizomatically, as “experimentations with the real” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987)

My work attempts to make the boundaries of research “more modulatory. More flexibly membranous. More intensely lived between more relational dimensions.” (Massumi, 2002, p. 206) I believe that food memory can be food becoming: “experience reassessing its powers of emergence for more effect. It is the existential equivalent of lifting oneself up by the boot straps- ontogenetic and autopoietic.” (Massumi, 2002) One of the ways I propose to accomplish this poesis is to bring the lived experience of the thesis process into the present tense through a publically attended art installation that aims to create “biograms” from my research experiences. A biogram is essentially a synesthetic living diagram “based on already lived experience, revived to orient further experience.” The installation will attempt to invoke what has passed during my research process by re-membering my project through the sharing of food, music, spoken word and art exhibits while hopefully evoking a reconfiguration of the research project that passes from me to those present, allowing each to participate in the active process of research creation. Schreckner speaks of performance as “twice behaved behavior” or “restored behavior”, (Schreckner, 1985, p. 36 in (McKenzie, 2001) this echoes Massumi’s concept of synesthetic

biograms in that it allows for the past to be re-configured in the present. My installation will engage with the “fields of subjectivity” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) I encountered through my thesis and integrate them with the fields of those reading/experiencing it. In this way, the “incessant archiving, transformation and the transmission of practices” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 209) that I hope to enact in my thesis remain an active part of how I communicate it. Additionally, I hope to demonstrate how the embodied nature of performative autoethnographic sensibility “re-poses the body’s reconnectability towards change” (Massumi, 2002, p. 119), suggesting the potential for involving all those present in cycles of re-volution.

Bibliography

Akwesasne Notes, _ (Ed.). (1977). *A Basic Call To Consciousness*. Mohawk Nation via Roosevelt, NY: Native Voices.

Allen, L., Oskar-Cole, J., & Woelfle-Erskine, C. (Eds.). (2007). *Dam Nation: Dispatches from the Water Underground*. New York: Soft Skull Press.

An Act for the Government and Protection of Indians. (1850, April 22). *Chapter 133. California Statutes* . (R. Imrie, Compiler) <http://www.indiancanyon.org/ACTof1850.html>.

Anderson, M. K. (2005). *Tending the Wild: Native American Knowledge and the Management of California's Natural Resources*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Ansell, C. K., & Di Palma, G. (2004). *Restructuring Territoriality*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Antoniou, G. (2007). THE LOST ATLANTIS OF OBJECTIVITY: THE REVISIONIST STRUGGLES BETWEEN THE ACADEMIC AND PUBLIC SPHERES. *History and Theory* 46 (4) , 92-112.

Bakker, E. (1984). *An island called California : an ecological introduction to its natural communities*. Berkeley: UC Press.

Barnett, C. (1999). Culture, government and spatiality Reassessing the Foucault Effect in Cultural-Policy Studies. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 2 (3) , 369-397.

Bartleson, J. (1995). *A Genealogy of Sovereignty*. Cambridge, UK: University Press, Cambridge .

Benson, J. (1999). Undocumented Immigrants and the Meat Packing Industry in the Midwest. In D. W. Haines, & K. E. Rosenblum, *Illegal Immigration in America: A Reference Handbook* (pp. 173-215). Westport, CT: Greenwood.

Bronson, M. (2004). Welcome to an Ancient Future: The End of Five Hundred Years of Solitude. *ReVision*, 26:3 , 1-4.

Brooks, M., D'Antonio, C., Richardson, D. M., Grace, J., Keeley, J., DiTomasso, J., et al. (2004). Effects of Invasive Alien Plants on Fire Regimes. *BIOSCIENCE* 54:7 , 677-688.

Butler, J. (2004). Introduction: Acting in Concert . In *Undoing Gender* (pp. 1-16). London: Routledge.

- Butz, D. (2009). Autoethnography as Sensibility. In D. DeLyser, S. Herbert, S. Aitken, M. Crang, & L. McDowell, *Sage: Handbook of Qualitative Geography* (pp. 138-155). London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Campbell, J. (1964). *The Masks of God: Occidental Mythology*. New York: Viking Press.
- Carroll, L. (n.d.). *A Mad Tea Party*. Retrieved 12 1, 2009, from Alices Adventures in Wonderland: <http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~rgs/alice-VII.html>
- Choy, P. P. (2007). *Canton Footprints: Sacramento's Chinese Legacy*. Sacramento: Chinese American Council of Sacramento.
- Cook, I. E. (2006). Geographies of Food:Following. *Progress in Human Geography* .
- De Certeau, M. (1984). *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: UC Press.
- De Certeau, M. (2000). The Scriptural Economy. In M. De Certeau, *The Certeau Reader* (pp. 158-176). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. (B. Massumi, Trans.) Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Deloria Jr., V. (1999). *Spirit and Reason*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum.
- Denzin, N. K. (2003). Performing [Auto] Ethnography Politically. *The Review of Education, Pedagogy and Cultural Studies* , 25:257-278.
- Desmarais, A. A. (2007). *La Via Campesina: Globalization and the Power of Peasants*. Halifax: Fernwood Press.
- Deumling, D., Wackernagel, M., & Monfreda, C. (2003, August). *EATING UP THE EARTH: How sustainable Food Systems Shrink our Ecological Footprint*. Retrieved February 18, 2008, from Sustainable Food Systems Funders: http://www.safsf.org/documents/ag_food_v6%20FINAL%208-21-03.pdf
- di Franco, A. (Composer). (2004). Grand Canyon. On *Educated Guess*. Buffalo, NY: Righteous Babe Records.
- di Franco, A. (Composer). (2003). Serpentine. On *Evolve*. Buffalo, NY: Righteous Babe Records.
- Domosh, M., & Seager, J. (2001). *Putting Women in Place: Feminist Geographers Make Sense of the World*. New York: Guilford Publications.

Federici, S. (2003). *Caliban and the witch: women the body and primitive accumulation*. New York: Autonomedia.

Fitzmaurice, A. (2007). The Genealogy of Terra Nullius. *Australian Historical Studies*, 129 , 1-16.

Forum on Food Sovereignty, N. 2. (2007, September). *Forum Documents*. Retrieved December 11, 2007, from Via Campesina:

http://www.viacampesina.org/main_en/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=282&Itemid=38

Forum on Food Sovereignty, N. 2. (2007, September). *Forum Documents: Theme 3*. Retrieved December 11, 2007, from Nyeleni 2007: <http://www.nyeleni2007.org/spip.php?article115>

Foucault, M. (1990). *History of Sexuality*. New York, Toronto: Random House.

Foucault, M. (1972). *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Gabrukiewicz, T. (1999, 9 12). Our Sacred River of Life. *Record Searchlight* , p. Retrieved from: <http://www.geocities.com/cott1388/sacriver.html> on 08/08/2009.

Giroux, H. (2007). Impure Acts: The Practical Politics of Cultural Studies (2000) . In N. Denzin, *Performing Auto-Ethnography Politically*.

Gluck, L. (1993). Introduction: Proofs and Theories. In G. Louise, *The Best American Poetry 1993*. New York: The Eco Press.

Goings, D. B. (2009). *Impact of Dams*. Retrieved 08 08, 2009, from Science Encyclopedia: Dams - Impact Of Dams

Gudde, E. G. (1949). *California Place Names: A Geographical Dictionary*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Guthman, J. (2004). *Agrarian Dreams: The Paradox of Organic Farming in California*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: UC Press.

Hale, E. (1864, March). *The Queen of California*. Retrieved November 5, 2008, from Cornell University Library: <http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/moa/pageviewer?root=%2Fmoa%2Fatla%2Fatla0013%2F&tif=00271.TIF&cite=http%3A%2F%2Fcdl.library.cornell.edu%2Fcgi-bin%2Fmoa%2Fmoa-cgi%3Fnotisid%3DABK2934-0013-41&coll=moa&frames=1&view=50>

Harper, D. (2001, November). *Agriculture*. Retrieved March 31, 2009, from Online Etymology Dictionary : <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=agriculture>

Harraway, D. (1984). Teddy Bear Patriarchy: Taxidermy in the Garden of Eden, New York city 1908-1936 . *Social Text* 11 , 20-64.

Harris, T. (1991). *Death in the Marsh*. Washington D.C.: Island Press.

Harvey, D. (2000). *Spaces of Hope*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of CA Press.

Harvey, D. (2003). *The New Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hinton, L. (1994). *Flutes of Fire: Essays on California Indian Languages*. Berkeley: Heyday Books.

Hobbes, T. (1962). *Leviathan*. Collier Books: New York.

Isenberg, A. C. (2005). *Mining California*. New York: Hill and Wang.

Kegley, S. H. (2008, 09). *California Pesticide Use*. Retrieved 08 08, 2009, from PAN Pesticide Use Database: http://www.pesticideinfo.org/Search_Use.jsp

Konkow Valley Band of Maidu . (2007, 11 23). *Maidu Culture, Maidu History, Ghost Indians of California*. Retrieved 08 08, 2009, from Official Site of the Konkow Valley band of Maidu: <http://www.maidu.com/maidu/index.html>

Krasner, S. (1999). *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Kroeber, A. ([1925] 1976). *Handbook of California Indians*. Washington D.C., Reprint: New York: Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 78 and Dover.

Kwa, A. (2002, April). *Institute For Agriculture and Trade Policy*. Retrieved February 20, 2008, from Development Box: Can It Adequately Address the Agricultural Crisis in Developing Countries?: <http://www.tradeobservatory.org/library.cfm?RefID=25483>

Latour, B. (2004). *Politics of Nature (Originally: Politiques de la Natur)*. (C. Porter, Trans.) Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Lazarus, E. (2009). *The New Colossus*. Retrieved August 08, 2009, from Liberty State Park, Liberty Science Center, The Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island Website: <http://www.libertystatepark.com/emma.htm>

Lincoln, A. (1863, November). Draft of the The Gettysburg Address: Nicolay Copy. Washington D.C.: The Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division.

Lovelock, J. (2000). *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth, 3rd ed.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

MacMillan, K. (2006). *Sovereignty and possession in the English new world : the legal foundations of empire, 1576-1640* . Cambridge,UK: Cambridge University Press.

Margolin, M. (Ed.). (1993). *The Way We Lived: California Indian Stories, Songs and Reminiscences*. Berkeley, CA: Heyday Books.

Massumi, B. (2002). Navigating Movements. In M. Zournazi, *Hope: New Philosophies for Change* . Annandale, Queensland: Pluto Press.

Massumi, B. (2002). *Parables for the Virtual*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Matthews, C. (1992). *Sophia, Goddess of Wisdom*. London: The Aquarian Press.

McKay, D. (1993). Baler Twine: Thoughts on ravens, home and nature poetry. *Studies in Canadian Literature* 18(1) .

McKenzie, J. (2001). *Perform or Else*. New York: Routledge.

McMichael, P. (2004). Global Development and The Corporate Food Regime. *The Symposium on New Directions in the Sociology of Rural Development* (pp. 1-24). Trondheim, Suisse: XI World Congress of Rural Sociology.

McMichael, P., & Patel, R. (2004). Third Worldism and the lineages of global fascism: the regrouping of the global South in the neoliberal era. *Third World Quarterly* , 231-254.

Merchant, C. (1983). *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution*. New York: Harper and Row.

Meyer, M. A. (1998). Native Hawaiian Epistemology: Contemporary Natives. Dissertation.: Harvard University.

Mies, M. (1998). *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale*. London: Zed Books.

Mitchell, D. (2003). *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space*. . New York: Guilford Press.

Moss, P. (2000). Writing One's Life. In P. Moss (Ed.), *Placing Autobiography in Geography* (pp. 1-21). Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Mt. Shasta Recreation and Parks District. (2009). *Park Headquarters*. Retrieved 08 08, 2009, from Mt Shasta City Park: <http://www.msrec.org/headquarters.htm>

Navdanya. (2007). *Earth Democracy*. Retrieved 12 12, 2007, from Navdanaya: www.navdanya.org

Norton, J. (1979). *When Our Worlds Cried: Genocide in Northern California*. San Francisco: The Indian Historian Press.

Obama, B. (2009, 01 20). *Full text of Barrack Obama's Inaugural Address*. Retrieved 08 08, 2009, from CBC Canada: <http://www.cbc.ca/world/story/2009/01/20/obama-speech-text.html>

Patel, R. (2005). Global Fascism Revolutionary Humanism and the Ethics of Food Sovereignty. *Development* 48:2 , 79-83.

Pidwirny, M. (2009, May 25). *Glossary of terms*. Retrieved August 08, 2009, from Physical Geography. Net: <http://www.physicalgeography.net/physgeoglos/e.html#energy>

Polk, D. B. (1995). *The Island of California: A History of the Myth*. Omaha: University of Nebraska Press.

Pratt, M. L. (1994). Transculturation and Autoethnography. In F. Barker, P. Hulme, & M. Iverson, *Colonia Discourse, Post-colonial Theory* (pp. 24-45). Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.

Pyne, S. (2001). *Fire: A Brief History*. Weyerhaeuser Environmental Books.

Reed-Danahay, D. (1997). Introduction. In D. Reed-Danahay, *Auto/Ethnography : Rewriting the Self and the Social*. (pp. 1-17). Oxford and New York : Berg Publishers.

Reisner, M. (1993). *Cadillac Desert: The American West and its Disappearing Water*. New York: Penguin Books.

Res Ipsa Loquitur. (2009, 07 08). Retrieved 08 08, 2009, from Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Res_ipsa_loquitur

Schein, R. (2006). *Race and Landscape in the United States*. New York: Routledge.

Schick, C. (2000). By Virtue of being White': resistance in anti-racist pedagogy. *Race , Ethnicity and Education* 3(1) , 83-101.

Scott, J. (1998). *Seeing Like A State: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Shiva, V. (1997). *Biopiracy: The Plunder of Nature and Knowledge*. Toronto: Between the Lines.

Slocum, R. (2006). Anti-racist Practice and the Work of Community Food Organizations. *Antipode* 38(2) , 327-349.

Slocum, R. (2007). Whiteness, space and alternative food practice. *Geoforum* 38(3) , 520-533.

Smith, A. (1789). *Wealth Of Nations*.

Star Newspaper. (1889, August 31). Flints and fire sticks: Savage ways of making fire: Drills and strike-a-lights. *Star Newspaper* .

Stene, Eric A. (2009). *Introduction to the Central Valley Project*. Retrieved 08 08, 2009, from U.S. Bureau of Reclamation: <http://www.usbr.gov/history/cvpintro.html>

Stengers, I. (1996). *Cosmopolitique vol.7*. Paris: Le Plessis-Robinson: La Decouverte/Synthelabo.

Sullivan, J. (1839). The Great Nation of Futurity. *The United States Democratic Review* , 6 (23), 426-430.

Summer, M. (Ed.). (1991). *The Malleus maleficarum of Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger*. London: Courier Dover Publications.

Sutton, D. (2005). Synesthesia, Memory and the Taste of Home. In C. Korsmeyer (Ed.), *The Taste Culture Reader Experiencing Food and Drink* (pp. 304-317). New York: Berg.

The Latin Vulgate Bible (Stuttgart Edition). (2005). Retrieved 08 08 <http://vulgate.org/index.htm>, 2009, from Vulgate.Org.

Tuhiwai-Smith, L. (1999). *Decolonizing Methodologies*. Dunedin, NZ: University of Otago Press.

US Declaration of Independence. (n.d.).

USGS. (2008, 08 09). *Detail: Sacramento River*. Retrieved 08 08, 2009, from Geographic Names Information Systems:
http://geonames.usgs.gov/pls/gnispublic/f?p=gnispq:3:1282247067605406::NO::P3_FID:1654949

USGS. (2009, 02 09). *NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BASIN-FILL AQUIFERS*. Retrieved 08 08, 2009, from US Groundwater Atlas: http://pubs.usgs.gov/ha/ha730/ch_b/B-text5.html

Vannini, P. (2006). Home/Self/Ecology/Politic. *Cultural Studies Critical Methodologies* , 217-225.

Walker, R. (2004). *The Conquest of Bread, 150 years of Agribusiness in California*. New York: The New Press.

Weed, S. (1989). *Healing Wise*. Woodstock, NY: Ash Tree Publishing.

Winnemem Wintu Tribe. (n.d.). *Who Are the Winnemem Wintu, War Dance at Shasta Dam*. Retrieved 08 08, 2009, from Winnemem Wintu: Our Long Journey to Justice: <http://www.winnememwintu.us/>

Winterson, J. (2008). *Books: Gut Symmetries*. Retrieved April 3, 2009, from Jeanette Winterson: <http://www.jeanettewinterson.com/pages/content/index.asp?PageID=11>

Winterson, J. (1997). *GUT Symmetries*. London: Granta Books.

Young, I. M. (1990). *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Zwicky, J. (2008). *Wisdom and Metaphor*. Kenville, Nova Scotia: Gaspereau Press.